

# Japanese Art from the Gerry Collection in The Metropolitan Museum of Art



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# Director's Foreword

THIS SELECTION OF JAPANESE ART is a promised gift to The Metropolitan Museum of Art from Peggy and Roger Gerry. The works were chosen to emphasize the particular character of the collection, the result of a lifetime journey that has been no less than a recapitulation of the appreciation of Japanese art in the West from the seventeenth century to the present. Like many Americans, the Gerrys trace their involvement with Japanese art to the aftermath of the Second World War, when Dr. Gerry served in Japan as an officer in the United States Navy and Mrs. Gerry had the opportunity to exhibit her own artistic explorations under new influences. In Japan, they began the indefatigable learning and collecting that have evolved from an initial passion for export porcelain to a refined sensitivity to the long tradition of Japanese arts, a tradition virtually unknown outside Japan before the present century.

In this exhibition, the more than ninety examples of export porcelain reflect the developments stimulated by the international trade carried on by the Dutch in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Such porcelain was among the first Japanese art to be known in Europe, treasured there as exotica and displayed in formal groupings as interior decoration. The Gerry Collection exemplifies a keen awareness of the fertile interaction of artistic sources that spurred the development of Japanese porcelain.

A choice, smaller group, of ceramic utensils made for Japanese use from prehistoric times to the nineteenth century, reflects the understanding by Western collectors after the Second World War of Japan's history and aesthetic traditions, as well as the advances in the field of ceramics history that resulted from postwar excavations. Along with the Gerrys' deepening connoisseurship came fortuitous opportunities; although not then widely appreciated outside Japan, the Buddhist art and Muromachi-period screens included here rank among the finest examples of their kind.

Added to the Museum's collection, these astutely assembled works considerably enhance the exposition of Japan's artistic history in the frequently rotated exhibitions in the Japanese galleries. Besides the significant additions to the ceramics collection, the Heian-period Buddhist icons and sutra augment the Museum's holdings with important and beautiful early pieces. A prime example of Kano school figure painting, the Muromachi-period screens that depict the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments give the Museum unparalleled strength in this major tradition of Japanese painting.

PHILIPPE DE MONTEBELLO

# Preface

OUR INTEREST IN COLLECTING BEGAN long before we lived in Japan. During our early married years in Philadelphia, at the end of and shortly after the Second World War, we were exposed to block after block of houses and more substantial buildings, which created a visual impact comparable to that of many of the European cities we had visited, individually, earlier. The Philadelphia years were stimulating and exciting. Peggy attended the Pennsylvania Academy of the Fine Arts, and I was on the staff of the naval hospital. Some of the world's most impressive museums were in Philadelphia, as was one of the world's foremost park systems. Pine Street and the countryside around Philadelphia were filled with available period American furniture, as well as with European ceramics and Chinese export porcelain. The things we bought in Philadelphia we still have.

After Philadelphia came a two-year tour of duty on the island of Guam, which had been brutalized by the war, like all the other southwest Pacific islands, but which was growing back and still beautiful. Even here there were things to collect: shells, missionary-inspired early-nineteenth-century furniture made of ifil, the superb Micronesian rosewood, and other things that no one else seemed to want. A few early-nineteenth-century houses survived, roofless but easily repairable, though no one was interested in restoring them. A bit of archaeological digging produced fragments of Chinese porcelain and bronze, reminders of the time when Guam was a watering place on the Spanish trade route between Manila and Acapulco.

Life in Japan was an inspiration. We lived in a small naval house on a cliff at the head of Sagami Bay, from which we could see Emperor Hirohito's research station at Aberatsubo. Because we knew something about the fundamentals of porcelain, as well as the principles of systematic collecting, we knew we had to learn before we could acquire. Our initial venture was in architecture, in which a commitment to acquisition was not necessary. By the time we left Japan, we had visited and photographed all the Nara and Heian as well as most of the Kamakura-period temples, often in the company of Chozo Yamanouchi and Gregory Walsh, the latter a naval communicator who was also a registered architect. During this initial period, the Philip Medicus collection of American swords was offered for sale by catalogue and we were able to buy a small, but complete, group of U.S. Navy swords, which we still own.

During this initial period, we met Colonel John Figgess, at that time military attaché of the British embassy, and Soame Jenyns, of the British

Museum, who arrived to spend a year-long British Council Fellowship in Japan. Sir John Figgess, then and to the present day, has provided significant support, guidance, and encouragement in our collecting endeavors. During their years in Japan, Colonel and Mrs. Figgess provided us with a room in their home. Together, we would spend weekends in Tokyo, touring the museums and shops. John Figgess justified his overwhelming kindness to us by explaining that he “wanted to discuss Japanese pots in English.” He continues to be a close friend.

There were many great, privately owned collections in Kanagawa Prefecture, where we lived, and Soame Jenyns, too, spent many weekends with us during his year-long stay, providing for us the opportunity to see at firsthand collections we otherwise would not even have known about. Our friendship with Soame Jenyns and his interest in our collection continued until his death, many years later.

These two Britons and several Japanese spent day after day—sometimes night after night—in discussions with us on the criteria for the examination of Japanese pottery and porcelain. Among these were Matsushige (Fukōsai) Hirota and Hiroshi Hirota, of Kochūkyō, and Yoji Uchino, of Heisandō, who assured us they could find the best that was available for what we were able to spend. Their interest in our collection continued long after we had left Japan, and for many years we made purchases in Tokyo and London, with the complete assurance that someone was on the local scene to represent us.

The late Fujio Koyama, of the Agency for Cultural Affairs, and Hisao Sugahara, now director of the Nezu Museum in Tokyo, became close friends, mentors, and frequent guests in our home for as long as we lived in Japan. Our friendship with Hisao Sugahara continues today. Masanobu Matsushita, a protégé of Hisao Sugahara, we met in New York. On subsequent American trips, he always brought along a painting or two for us to examine. The Heian sutra from Chuson-ji (No. 1) is one of these.

From repeated sessions with these and many other scholars, we gradually evolved a sense of the direction in which we wanted to go. We were especially fortunate in being exposed to and learning to understand the viewpoints of both the East and the West. Most Japanese collectors were at that time almost unaware of the amount of Japanese porcelain that had found its way to Indonesia and Europe, some of it manufactured specially for the European market, beginning as early as the mid-seventeenth century. Conversely, most Western collectors did not know even of the existence of the superb group of ceramics potted exclusively for use in Japan, which they confused with late-nineteenth-century porcelains manufactured exclusively for Western markets. Some of the latter even bore traditional Japanese names, such as “Arita,” “Imari,” and “Kutani,” although any resemblance was in name only.

Our first purchase was a Muromachi-period Negoro lacquer ewer which had a perfect, simple profile and superb color. We tried to maintain this standard in subsequent acquisitions. First of all, we hoped to have a comprehensive collection so that when we left Japan, we would have typical examples to refer to. Second, we wanted each object we acquired to be a work of art. We were willing, if necessary, to accept a damaged example if it was truly beautiful in preference to a perfect example of a less aesthetic work. We had, for example, our choice of hundreds of intact Shigaraki jars, but we chose the one on exhibit

(No. 16) because it was the most beautiful, even if damaged. Beyond these two basic requirements, we were haphazard collectors, never looking for specific objects to fill voids in the collection. We bought what our senses told us to buy, and gradually we acquired experience. Whatever we bought we both liked. Neither of us tried to convince the other to buy a piece against his or her better judgment. Nor did we limit our acquisitions to single, near-perfect pieces. If examples of a specific category caught our attention after our initial purchase, we bought them as well, so that later we would be able to compare the different characteristics and qualities of a specific ware. We hoped that ultimately ours would become a teaching collection, employed in the training of future scholars. Many of the pieces we bought came from the most informed dealers in Japan. Many more came from small shops in Yokosuka and Kamakura and on the Yokohama waterfront, as well as from most of the many places we visited. One of our most important pieces was acquired in fragments, individually, because we recognized the beautiful Hakuho-era glaze. One of life's great thrills came when this turned out to be an almost intact pilgrim's flask (No. 10). Nearly all the examples we bought, we kept. If we liked an object well enough to buy it, we enjoyed it enough to want to keep it.

ROGER GERRY

# Acknowledgments

NONE OF THE DAYDREAMS that filled my childhood visits to Roslyn, New York, spent in the lovely park bordering a carefully restored early-nineteenth-century house and garden, came close to the adventure that began years later when, inside that long-admired house, I was invited to share its owners' delight in Japanese art. To Peggy and Roger Gerry, I am ever grateful for their opening to me not only their collection but a vast store of anecdotes about a Japan I did not know. The years of learning and new friendships that ensued have been no less fascinating and far-flung than the historical crosscurrents between the cultures of Japan and China, seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Europe, and postwar America which are reflected in the collection of Japanese art presented here.

Initial and continuing encouragement came from Professor Miyeko Murase, who first made me aware of the importance of the Gerry Collection. It was in the exhibition *Byōbu: Japanese Screens from New York Collections*, which she organized at the Asia Society Gallery in New York in 1971, when I was her student at Columbia University, that the pair of screens *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments* was first seen outside Japan. Another mentor, Professor Wen Fong, Special Consultant for Asian Affairs at the Metropolitan Museum, ever alert to the importance of bringing major works of art to public and academic attention, conceived and supported the effort that has resulted in the most welcome gift celebrated in this exhibition.

To my friend and coauthor, Oliver R. Impey, are due not only esteem for his connoisseurship of Japanese porcelain and expertise in the history of its use and collection in Europe, but boundless appreciation for his infectious enthusiasm and indefatigable tutoring in a field in which I had little previous experience. At his instigation, and with the support of the Metropolitan Museum Grants Committee under Penelope Bardel, I was able to study Japanese porcelain with him at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and then to visit many of the remaining early collections of Japanese art in Europe. Among the helpful contacts he provided, I mention with gratitude the welcome I received from Lady Victoria Leatham at Burghley House, Lincolnshire, and, in the Netherlands, from Dr. Herman Daendels of Amsterdam, a collector-connoisseur in the seventeenth-century tradition, Dr. Barbara Harrison at the Gemeentelijk Museum "Het Prinsessehof" in Leeuwarden, and Dr. W.R. van Gulik and Dr. Matti Forrer at the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde, Leiden. In Geneva, the collection of Japanese porcelain at the Collections Baur was most courteously shown to me by Mme Vèrène Nicollier. To Dr. Masako Shono, of the Museum



für Ostasiatische Kunst, Cologne, and to Dr. Bettina Klein, I am grateful for the arrangements to visit the early German porcelain collections at Nymphenburg and the Residenzmuseum in Munich, and the beautifully restored Schloss Favorite, Rastatt, where I was cordially escorted by Dr. Rosemarie Stratmann-Döhler of the Badisches Landesmuseum Schloss, Karlsruhe. To Dr. Friedrich Reichel, at the Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, keeper of the greatest early porcelain collection in Europe, I am grateful for a careful introduction to the treasures there that Dr. Impey inspired me to study.

Among the many colleagues whose interest and advice contributed invaluable to this project, special thanks must go to Dr. Louise Cort of the Freer Gallery of Art, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C., who unstintingly shared her expertise and carefully checked my fledgling efforts in her field of ceramics. Dr. Hiroko Nishida, Chief Curator at the Nezu Institute of Fine Arts, Tokyo, also gave generously of her time and experience. Arata Shimao, a specialist in Muromachi ink painting at the Tokyo National Research Institute of Cultural Properties, provided many enlightening insights to the history of the *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments*, as did Hiroshi Onishi, Research Curator in the Department of Asian Art at the Metropolitan Museum, and Dr. Bettina Klein, an expert in Kano school painting.

In the preparation of the catalogue, I was much aided by the patient and careful assistance of Linda Rosenfeld Shulsky, who tirelessly gathered and organized material and who contributed to this project her own knowledge and enthusiasm for European decorative arts. Emily March has gone beyond editorial duty in her calm and meticulous care not only for every aspect of this book but for its author's often rushed and ruffled life. Others on the editorial team, headed by John P. O'Neill, who have contributed with exemplary professionalism are Helga Lose, who ably saw to the color printing of the photographs taken with sensitive craftsmanship by Sheldan Collins; Antony Drobinski, whose keen eye shaped the elegant design of the book; and Heidi Colsman-Freyberger, who painstakingly met the challenge of a multilanguage bibliography.

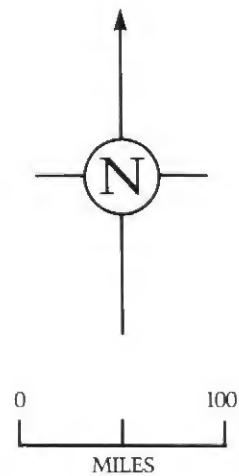
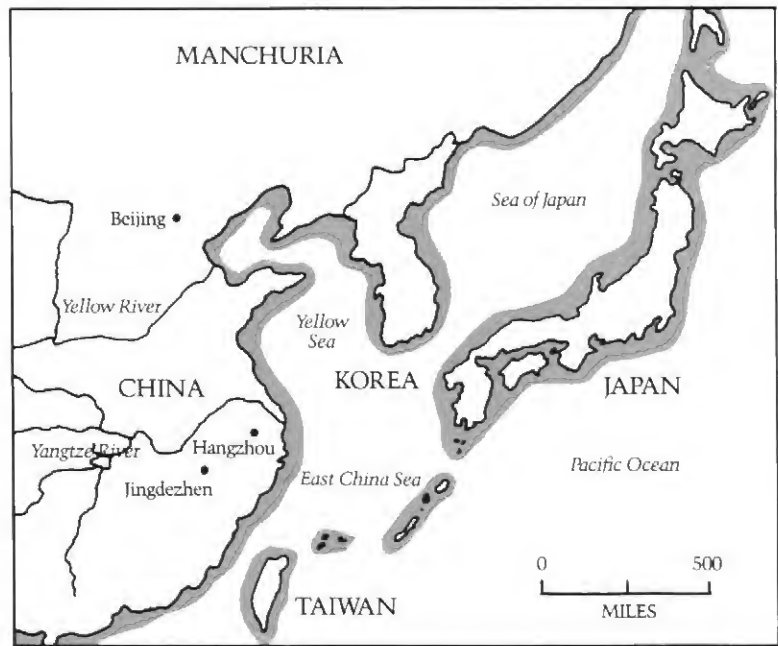
BARBARA BRENNAN FORD

# Chronology of Japanese Art

JŌMON	10,000 B.C. – ca. 250 B.C.
YAYOI	ca. 250 B.C. – A.D. 250
KOFUN	ca. A.D. 250 – 552
ASUKA	552 – 646
EARLY NARA (HAKUHŌ)	646 – 710
NARA (TEMPYŌ)	710 – 794
EARLY HEIAN	794 – 898
LATE HEIAN (FUJIWARA)	898 – 1185
KAMAKURA	1185 – 1333
NAMBOKUCHŌ	1333 – 1392
MUROMACHI	1392 – 1568
MOMOYAMA	1568 – 1615
EDO	1615 – 1867
MEIJI	1868 – 1912

# Major Kiln Sites







大般若波羅蜜多經卷第三百十六  
初分真善文品第四十五之四  
藏經古集 鈔譯

# Religious Art of the Heian Period

JAPAN'S MOST IMPORTANT ENCOUNTER with the culture of its mainland neighbors Korea and China came with the introduction of Buddhism. Knowledge of the Indian religion must have filtered into Japan through its close contacts with the southern Korean kingdom of Kaya during the period from the third to the sixth century, when Buddhism was spread throughout China. The earliest recorded appearance of Buddhism in Japan is in A.D. 552, when emissaries arrived at the Japanese court from the Korean kingdom of Paekche. Along with gifts of sutras and Buddhist images came the sincere behest of the Korean prince that this most excellent but difficult religion be adopted for the welfare and enlightenment of all peoples.

After a period of resistance by factions vested in the theocratic institutions of the Yamato court, Prince Shōtoku, who ruled Japan as regent from A.D. 593 until his death in 622, proclaimed Buddhism the state religion. Under such patronage, Buddhism flourished throughout the succeeding centuries, and the culture and institutions of China were adapted to Japanese form along with the religion. Nara, modeled after the Tang capital Changan, was established as Japan's first permanent capital. The Buddhist institutions at Nara became so powerful that at the end of the eighth century the court resorted to reasserting its authority by moving the capital and withdrawing its support from the great Nara temples. In the new capital, Heian, the rival Nara sects were superseded by esoteric sects that had originated in China and to which the court ultimately gave its support for their role as protectors of the nation. The rituals of these sects, Tendai promulgated by Saichō (767–822) and Shingon by Kūkai (774–835), required a vast panoply of religious art directly modeled on that of Tang China. This was produced under the unstinting patronage of the Japanese court.

During the twelfth century, an age beset by wars, famine, and natural disasters (all of which were believed to signal the onset of the Buddhist era of *mappō*, the age of the disintegration of the Buddhist law, which had been calculated to begin in 1052), faith in the mystical, indeed magical powers of esoteric practices intermingled with the belief in rebirth in Buddhist Pure Lands, especially the Western Paradise, presided over by the Buddha Amida. In such a tumultuous age devotional practices, such as the recitation of formulas of faith and the copying of sacred texts, were adopted as the most efficacious recourse by noblemen and common folk alike.

The gorgeous sutra scroll in the Gerry Collection, written in gold in lines

## 1 • First Sermon of the Buddha at Deer Park

Illustrated frontispiece  
to chapter 316 of the  
*Mahaprajna-sutra* (The  
Greater Sutra of the Per-  
fection of Wisdom; J:  
*Daihannya-haramit-  
ta-kyō*). Late Heian  
(Fujiwara) period (898–  
1185), ca. 1175. Gold  
and silver pigments  
on dark blue paper.  
10 × 7 1/8 in. (25.5 ×  
20 cm)

set off by silver borders and with an illustrated frontispiece in silver and gold, is one of a set of nearly five thousand scrolls dedicated in 1176 to the Chūson-ji, the clan temple of the northern branch of the Fujiwara, by Fujiwara no Hidehira (d. 1187). The set is a transcription of the *Tripitaka* (*Issai-kyō* in Japanese), the major corpus of the Buddha's teachings, brought from India to China by the great pilgrim Xuanzang in A.D. 645. Following the precedent of his grandfather Kiyohira (d. 1128), who commissioned and dedicated a complete transcription in 1126, this set, completed in 1175, was undertaken for the salvation of Hidehira's father, Motohira (d. 1157). The Fujiwara family had established a thriving center of courtly life in the remote northern provinces at Hiraizumi, in Iwate Prefecture. The Konjiki-dō (Golden Hall of Amida) at Chūson-ji remains one of the most lavish examples of Fujiwara architecture and taste.

The commissioning of such devotional works was by no means unique; throughout the twelfth century, many other such offerings were made or commissioned, a practice that had its roots in Tang China. The frontispiece of the Gerry scroll is more accomplished than many others from this set. The iconic triad of the deified preaching Buddha attended by two bodhisattvas, haloed and seated on lotus thrones, is well integrated into the landscape setting, in the *yamato-e* narrative style that evolved from Tang blue-and-green landscape painting. The five deer roaming freely in the vast landscape, defined by gold-and-silver layers of rolling hills receding to a horizon filled with silvered clouds, identify the setting as Deer Park, near Sarnath. There, after his enlightenment, the Buddha preached his first sermon to the five ascetics whom he had left after abandoning his attempts to achieve enlightenment through the practice of extreme austerity. Although they vowed to reject him, the ascetics were converted to his message and became his first disciples. This is one of the most important episodes in the legend of the Buddha's life. Although it is not described in the sutra, it serves here as a fundamental icon. The style of the painting reflects the contemporary development of narrative scrolls of secular literary works and Buddhist legends, such as *Kibi's Adventures in China*, at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston. In its delicate clarity and graceful delineation of figures and landscape elements, this lovely drawing in precious materials exhibits the refined aesthetics of the Heian court, while at the same time it evokes the simple faith that inspired the multiplicity of such works in the late Heian period.

A RELIGIOUS IMPULSE similar to that which inspired the Buddhist sutra (No. 1), to invoke by multiplicity of devotion the infinite mercy and power of the deity, inspired the serene and gentle standing image of the bodhisattva Shō Kannon (No. 2), one of a thousand similar figures once grouped together at the Kōfuku-ji, the Fujiwara clan temple at Nara. The number one thousand as symbolic of an infinitude of images has its roots in the *Sango-sanzen Butsumyō-kyō*, the *Sutra of the Thousand Buddhas of Three Kalpas*, which discusses the thousand Buddhas who appear in each of the kalpas of the past, the present, and the future. Early examples of Buddhist images in massed array can be seen painted or carved in low relief in Chinese cave temples such as those at Dunhuang and Longmen, which are themselves architectural expressions of the infinite multiplicity of the Buddha's mercy and power.



2 · Standing Image  
of Shō Kannon

Wood with traces of  
gilding and polychromy.  
Late Heian period  
(898–1185), 12th  
century. H. (with ped-  
estal) 18¼ in. (46.4 cm)



The earliest examples in Japan are the repoussé images on the interior of the Tamamushi shrine at Hōryū-ji. The rituals of Esoteric Buddhism, which require the envisioning of the multitudinous emanations of the Buddha in mandalas and the copying of iconographic drawings, are also related to this notion. At the end of the Heian period, the thousand Buddhas of the kalpa of the present, believed to be entering its last degenerate stage, inspired much devotion. The most famous example belongs to the late Fujiwara period, the one thousand images of Thousand-armed Kannon at the Sanjūsangen-dō (first built in 1164) of the Rengeō-in temple in Kyoto.

Worship of Shō Kannon, who offered succor to beings caught in hell, the lowest of the Six Realms of Existence, was an important cult from the Nara period. Shō Kannon, along with Senju, or Thousand-armed Kannon, who presided over the Realm of Hungry Ghosts, attained favored status among the court aristocracy in the Late Heian (Fujiwara) period. The creation of one thousand images of Shō Kannon at Kōfuku-ji was one of several lavish devotions for the material and spiritual well-being of its patrons and practitioners.

The delicately modeled features and shallow carving of the drapery, which falls loosely over the elongated figure, give this diminutive image a gentle grace and serenity that characterize the highest expression of sacred beauty in the late Fujiwara period. Traces of gilding on the face and exposed torso, and color pigment in intricate patterns on the robe, suggest the original splendid yet refined aspect of this image.

PERHAPS ONE OF THE MOST comforting beliefs of Pure Land Buddhism, which attracted adherents in increasing numbers during the Heian period, was the *raigō*, the vow of the Buddha Amida to go to meet a dying believer with a host of heavenly beings who would escort the faithful soul to its place of bliss, reborn within a lotus in the heavenly pond of Amida's Western Paradise.

Described in the Kammuryōju-kyō sutra and introduced to Japan in the Nara period in the painted icon known as the Taima mandala, the *raigō* became a particularly compelling image during the Fujiwara era (898–1185). Its fullest expression in painting, sculpture, and architecture is the Phoenix Hall at the Byōdō-in temple in Uji, which was built by Fujiwara no Yorimichi in 1053 as a re-creation of the Western Paradise on earth. On its interior doors and walls, surrounding the figure of the seated Amida, is painted a vision of Amida accompanied by a host of twenty-five bodhisattvas and heavenly beings who descend over the rolling hills of the Kyoto landscape to escort the dying believer to Paradise. The central figure, the monumental Amida by Jōchō, the eleventh-century sculptor (d. 1057), sits within a nimbus of clouds, surrounded by bas-relief wood carvings of heavenly beings on the upper walls.

The serene figure of a heavenly being in the Gerry Collection (No. 3), carved from a single block of Japanese cypress, was once part of such an iconographic scheme. It was one of a host of similar figures that framed the cloud nimbus of a seated image of Amida, the iconographic scheme that made explicit the faith in his saving power. Its sculptural style, which still retains the more sensuous rendering of the facial features and the deeper carving of the drapery folds and clouds of pre-Jōchō sculpture, suggests a date in the late tenth century, making this one of the earliest examples of *raigō* representation in sculpture. It is a rare vestige of the world of refined aestheticism and ardent faith so vividly described in the early eleventh century by Murasaki Shikibu in Japan's first novel, the court romance *The Tale of Genji*.



3 · Flying Angel from the Nimbus of a Figure of the Buddha Amida

Carved from a single block of Japanese cypress.  
Heian period (794–1185), 10th century. H. 12½ in.  
(31.8 cm)



# Gentlemanly Accomplishments: The Adaptation of Chinese Literati Culture

AMONG THE MANY ASPECTS of Chinese culture introduced to Japan, and there adapted and refined to such a degree as to become more firmly rooted in Japan than in China, was the folding screen. The earliest reference to a *byōbu* (literally, wind barrier) occurs in Japan's earliest historical work, the *Nihon Shoki*, compiled in the last three decades of the seventh century. This chronicle of the genesis of the Japanese land, gods, emperors, and history from mythological times records that a screen was sent by the Korean king of Silla to the Japanese court in the year 686. During the next century screens, a few still surviving among the some one hundred donated to the Tōdai-ji temple in Nara by the imperial family and kept there in the Shōsō-in repository, became an essential element in Japanese ceremonies and interior furnishings. From the outset of their development in Japan, portable folding screens, together with the sliding-door panels that function to divide or expand the flexible spaces of Japanese interiors, were not only functional architecturally; they also served as important formats for painting, and their themes were a telling marker of the inclinations and aspirations of a given era and society.

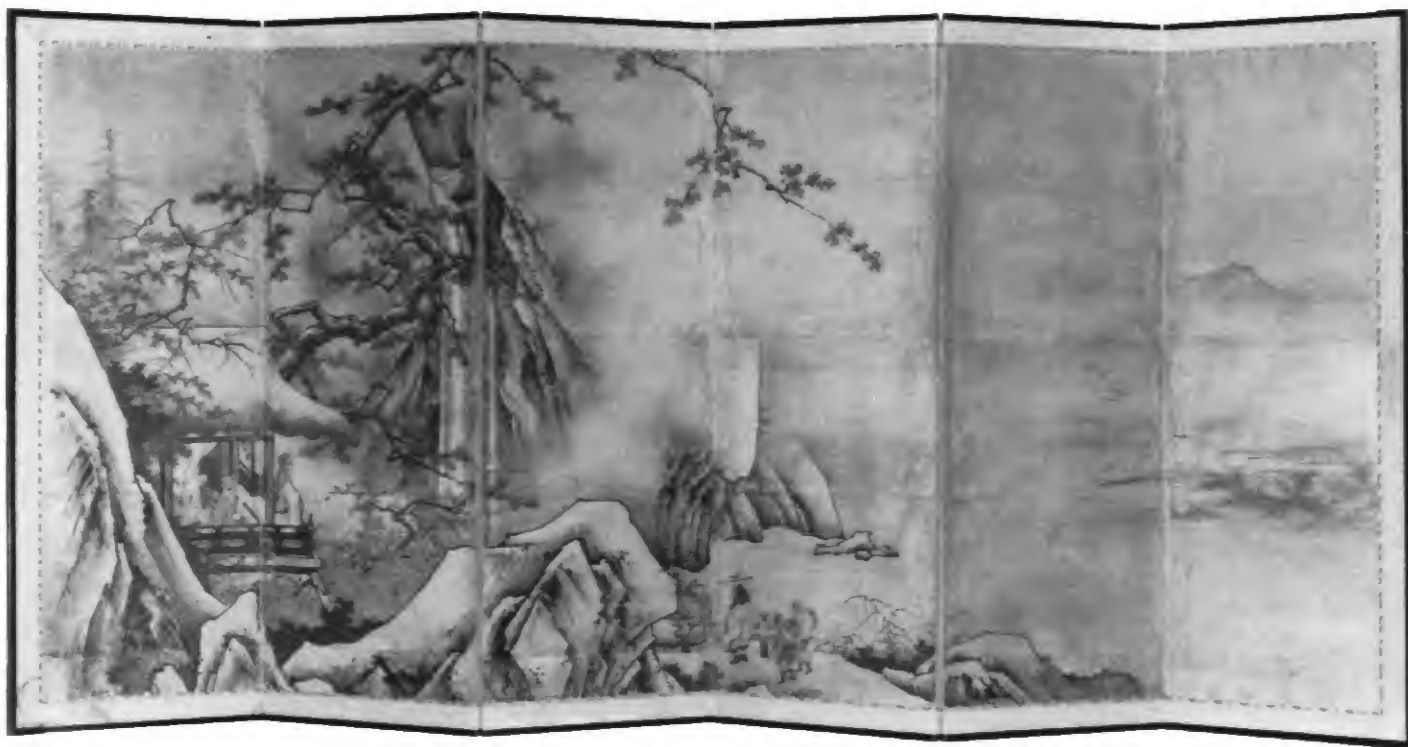
During the Heian period, the Chinese themes that reflected the Nara court's emulation of the great culture of Tang China were superseded in the eleventh and twelfth centuries by a preference for scenes of famous places in Japan that were associated with the seasonal pastimes of the aristocracy and closely related to court poetry. The cycle of the seasons from spring to winter, representing the totality of nature, became the underlying subject and compositional structure of screen painting, as it did for poetry.

With the assumption of power by the military during the Kamakura period (1185–1333) came a return to the idealization of the culture of China. During the fourteenth century, the first shogunate, at Kamakura, fostered the establishment of Zen temples that offered spiritual ideals compatible with the spartan life of the samurai, and introduced Chinese learning, which was increasingly adopted as the cultural framework for the shogunate. Inventories of two collections of Chinese paintings owned by military rulers document the formation of a classic repertoire of themes for ink painting and reflect a change of taste from an initial expression of Zen ideals to a secular, decorative mode deemed appropriate for the official class, which by the Muromachi period (1392–1568) was composed of military leaders, and of the monks of the Gozan Zen temples who functioned as an official bureaucracy. In the inventory (1320–65) of Butsunichi-an, the mortuary temple at Engaku-ji of the Hōjō

Detail

*Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments*  
(No. 4), left screen





regents, thirty-nine portraits of Zen masters predominate among sixty-nine paintings listed. There are nine images of legendary Zen sages and thirty-one secular subjects, such as orchids, bamboo, dragons and tigers, gibbons, and geese among reeds. Poems inspired by such paintings appear in anthologies of monks' writings as metaphors for the tenets of Zen. Initially, these subjects were probably perceived in that light, although ultimately they were adapted to the decorative formats of sliding doors and screens, a development that can be seen in the depictions of temple interiors in fourteenth-century narrative scrolls.

By the fifteenth century, when the larger collection of two hundred forty-eight Chinese paintings of the Ashikaga shoguns, begun by the third shogun, Yoshimitsu (1358–1408), was recorded during the time of the eighth shogun, Yoshimasa (1436–1490), a clear shift in taste and function had occurred. Most of these works were grouped in triptychs for hanging in the *tokonoma* alcove, an architectural feature which developed at that time for the display of prized Chinese art. The most significant change is the marked increase in landscape paintings. Among these, the most important is the distinct category of handscrolls depicting Eight Views of Xiao and Xiang, river and mountain landscapes of a fabled region in southern China. Several sections of these handscrolls, treasured over the centuries, survive. The scroll by the thirteenth-century monk painter Muqi, by far the most admired Chinese artist in Japan, with more than one hundred works listed, is painted in an evocative boneless-brush mode. A second scroll, by Yuqian, is in the expressionistic splashed-ink style. Another, which does not survive, was in the formal academic mode of Xia Gui (fl. 1190–1225). Together these works, subsequently cut in sections and remounted as hanging scrolls, were seminal to the development of Japanese ink

4 • Studio of Kano Motonobu, *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments*

Pair of six-fold screens, ink and slight color on paper. Muromachi period (1392–1568), mid-16th century. Each screen 67 × 150 in. (170.2 × 381 cm)



landscape painting, especially in screens and sliding doors.

During the latter part of the Muromachi period, a formula for screen painting developed in the formal brush mode of the Chinese Song and Ming academic painters. The formula integrates various scenes from Chinese mountain and river landscapes into a single large-scale composition. Of the twelve panels of a pair of folding screens, the central panels depict a vast expanse of water to distant mountains; at right and left, dramatic mountain landscapes frame the entire composition. From right to left such panoramic compositions show the progression of the seasons from spring to winter, assimilating the deeply rooted Japanese tradition. A prime example is the Metropolitan Museum's *Landscape of Four Seasons*, attributed to Kano Chōkichi (fl. first half of the sixteenth century). Because Chinese styles and themes reflected the official neo-Confucian ideology, which embraced the notion of man's fundamental identity with nature, Chinese landscapes came to be preferred for official rooms.

The *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments* (No. 4), the pair of screens in the Gerry Collection, is a prime example of an equally important variant of this mode; it depicts gentlemen scholars in the landscape. Unlike vast panoramas, compositions of figures in a landscape are organized by expanded foregrounds at right and left, where natural motifs such as trees or rocks frame and focus attention on the human activity. Distant views and references to the eternal cycle of the seasons, similar to those seen in panoramic landscape compositions, emphasize the mythic import of the human activity, which is drawn from Chinese literati lore. The specific theme of the *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments* represents the ideals of the cultivated enjoyment of music played on the *qin*, or zither, of games of strategy, of calligraphy, and of painting. Like





Detail

*Four Gentlemanly  
Accomplishments*  
(No. 4), right  
screen





Detail

*Four Gentlemanly  
Accomplishments*  
(No. 4), left screen



related Chinese themes of scholars in a natural setting, such as the Poetry Gathering at Lanting Pavilion, the Seven Sages of the Bamboo Grove, and the Elegant Gathering in the Western Garden, the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments is rooted in Chinese Taoist ideals of retirement and harmony with nature, which tempered the Confucian tradition of worldly responsibility. Such a complement of aspirations was at the heart of the ideology embraced by the Ashikaga shogunate under the tutelage of Zen monks.

In a sixteenth-century Zen temple residence or daimyo mansion, the Gerry screens provided a vast and mythic setting rich in pictorial and poetic allusion. Depicted on the screens is a realm that encompasses the Confucian tradition of the cultivation of humanity and the Taoist ideal of harmony with nature with a kindred Japanese response to the eternal cycle of the seasons. Beginning in springtime at the right, a stone bridge spans a rushing stream bordered by rugged cliffs, where ancient trees dance with the rhythm of returning life. Stopping on the bridge are a white-robed scholar accompanied by a boy carrying a *qin*, played by educated Chinese since ancient times. He watches three other gentlemen scholars who ponder the stones on the board of their game of strategy. So long and intently have they played that they notice neither the sleeping boy at their side nor the approach of their musical friend, whose arrival is awaited by a servant who stands near a stone table on which another *qin* is ready for use, along with incense, ink, and books, all implements for the refined amusements of the venerable sages. A summer day's somnolence is intimated by such details as the dozing boy and the robe shrugged off by one of the players. Natural elements, the tree's full foliage and the group of ducks near the mossy bank of the placid river, reinforce the summer imagery.

Echoing diagonals of the fore- and midground cliffs, boldly recapitulated in the jutting profile of the great cypress, separate the two groups of figures and frame the subjects celebrated here: the gentlemanly pursuits of music and the game known in Japanese as *go*, in the successive seasons of spring and summer. A distant view across a river to a far-off mountain range fills the two inner panels of both screens, following the formula for landscape composition developed in the late Muromachi period and codified in paintings from the studio of Kano Motonobu (1476–1559), to whom the screens have long been attributed. In the Gerry screens, geese descending to a reedy marsh in the right panels of the left-hand screen signal the onset of autumn, and serve as a prelude to the dramatic winter scene that dominates the composition. Along a winding path in the foreground, a scholar shown in the profile image and broad-brimmed hat of Su Dongpo (1036–1101), the Chinese literatus par excellence, makes his way around a rocky precipice. The two servants who follow carry packs of scrolls, presumably the reams of poetry and ink paintings of bamboo inextricably associated with this exemplar of the art of calligraphy. In the hermitage that nestles like a rook in the snowy mountainside, another scholar has turned from his contemplation of an ink painting to stand rapt before the awesome scene outside his retreat. Within this image of the cultivated appreciation of painting is couched a pictorial allusion to the Tang poet Li Bai (701–762), whose poem “Gazing at the Waterfall at Lushan” was well known in Japan and celebrated in many Muromachi paintings. The image of the poet, together with the related personification of calligraphic skill in the figure of Su Dongpo, enriches the



scene with a visual double entendre. This layering of images is reminiscent of the deeply rooted tradition of allusive wordplay in Japanese poetry, familiar in court poetry of the Heian and Kamakura periods as well as in the new poetic forms current among daimyo and Zen monks: *renga*, or linked verse, and Noh drama.

The theme of the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments seems to have been preeminent by the early fifteenth century; in the canon of accepted themes represented by the collection of the Ashikaga shoguns, the sole example of secular figure painting is a set of four hanging scrolls on this theme by the Southern Song academic painter Liang Kai (fl. 1201–4). While this was not the only theme in Muromachi painting derived from Chinese literati lore, it was clearly one of the most significant, and the oldest surviving examples on screens and sliding doors of figures in landscape are versions of this subject. In the definitive study of Kano Motonobu, Tsuji Nobuo lists as many as six works on this theme among Motonobu's accepted oeuvre. He includes the Gerry screens, which until 1927 were in the collection of a collateral branch of the Tokugawa family in Kii Province (Wakayama Prefecture).

The theme seems to have become important after the Ōnin War (1467–77), when prolonged fighting among rival daimyo laid waste the capital and exposed the weakness of the Ashikaga shogunate under Yoshimasa. The ideals of cultivated refinement symbolized by the gentlemanly accomplishments of the Chinese literati assumed a special significance as the increasingly powerless shoguns became preoccupied with aesthetic pursuits. Paintings on this

Detail  
*Four Gentlemanly  
Accomplishments*  
(No. 4), right  
screen



theme are conspicuous in the decoration of rooms used by daimyo patrons in Zen temples. They may well have been intended to edify, with Confucian models, a ruling class schooled in the way of the warrior.

Ōsen Keisan (1429–1493), one of the most learned and influential monks of the late Muromachi period, acted as an adviser in the commissioning of works of art for important residences. These included paintings by Motonobu's father, Masanobu (1434–1530), the first secular painter to assume the position of official painter to the shogunate in 1481, upon the death of Sōtan. Among Ōsen Keisan's hundreds of poems inspired by paintings, twenty-six are noted as describing paintings on screens or sliding doors. Of these, there are twice as many bird and flower subjects as landscape themes. Only one poem was unquestionably inspired by a figure painting, and that, significantly, is titled "Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments." This poetic appreciation describes sliding doors that he saw in 1467 when he was in Ōmi, where he stayed until 1492 at the Eigen-ji, under the protection of the daimyo Ogura Sanezumi. This is the earliest description of a large-scale work on the theme of the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments. It calls to mind a painting much like the Gerry screens:

*Sounds of the qin fill the moonlight with serenity,  
Strings large and small harmonize a full range of tones.  
How can one bear such heartrending tranquillity?  
I long for the music to echo in the windblown pines.*

*Unmoved by the rise or fall of worldly affairs,  
Mountain sages, silhouetted against the sunset, intently  
play their game.  
The young prince has called the sages from Mount  
Shang;  
Beware lest the clatter of the game be heard beyond the  
hermits' world.*

*Drunk with ink as though with wine,  
Does he write in the mode of Yan or Liu?  
Lost in brushwork at his table, the night forgotten,  
Like the three monks at Mount Ao's snowbound pass,  
he attains enlightenment.*

*What sublime brush has painted this scroll?  
Unrolling it, he wonders, Is it real or imagined?  
Though the dust of the world swirls round Budai,  
In his tattered sack is the plum-blossom spring.\**

These verses, filled with references to Chinese poetry and historical lore, suggest that the decoration of interior spaces in temples and daimyo mansions was promoted by monks for the edification of a widening circle of daimyo and aristocracy. In the aftermath of the destruction of Kyoto during the decade of

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\*Ōsen Keisan, *Tōyushū* (Journey to the East Anthology) [collected writings of the period 1467–68], in *Gozan Bungaku Shinshū* (New Collection of Japanese Literature), edited by Takeji Tamamura (Tokyo, 1967), vol. 1, pp. 57–58. Translation by Hiroshi Onishi and Barbara Brennan Ford.

the Ōnin War, Kano Masanobu and his son Motonobu received many commissions for screens and sliding doors. During the first half of the sixteenth century, Motonobu developed a repertoire of themes and styles that became sanctioned as appropriate for dwellings of the ruling elite. Among the major works of the sixteenth-century Kano school, the theme of the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments is conspicuously related to the secular patronage and public functions in Zen temples. The composition and style of the Gerry screens rework landscape and figure types seen in several major commissions that mark the development of the Kano school. The Reiun-in at Myōshin-ji, painted by Motonobu in 1543, is considered to represent the artist's fully developed style and is the epitome of the Muromachi Kano style. The grand Momoyama style is first seen at the Jukō-in at Daitoku-ji, painted in 1566 by his son Shōei (1519–1592) and grandson Eitoku (1543–1590). In the *hōjō*, or abbot's quarters, of those Zen temples, the major rooms face a garden to the south. Flanking the central room are two smaller chambers, the *danna no ma*, or patron's room, and the *rei no ma*, or reception room. Significantly, Motonobu's *danna no ma* at Reiun-in has sliding doors depicting the Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments, as does the same room by Eitoku at Jukō-in. The *danna no ma* in other representative *hōjō* of the period are decorated with kindred themes, such as that at the Shinju-an at Daitoku-ji, where Hasegawa Tōhaku painted the Four Sages of Mount Shang on the sliding doors.

Thus the Gerry screens, descended in one of the most important daimyo families of Japan, were painted to function not only as decorative architecture in the official taste but also to serve as an edifying image that placed its owners in a long and lofty tradition of learning and refinement. The fully established compositional formula, noted above, and the proficient brushwork in the formal, angular mode ultimately derive from Southern Song academicians such as Ma Yuan, Xia Gui, and Liang Kai, whose celebrated names are associated with paintings treasured in the collections of the shoguns.

The traditional attribution to Motonobu is not far from the mark, despite the spurious seals that were added later. This accomplished work, if not from Motonobu's own hand, was undoubtedly done under his close supervision by one of the several anonymous masters who worked in his tightly organized and prolific studio. In fact, it is likely that many large-scale commissions produced in the Kano workshop during the sixteenth century were the result of extensive collaboration. A daimyo patron, in consultation with a learned adviser among the Gozan Zen monks (or, as the scheme of decoration became more formulated, with the head of the studio), would choose subjects and styles for a particular commission from an extensive repertoire of models. When the Gerry screens are compared with Motonobu's *Four Gentlemanly Accomplishments* at Reiun-in or the screens in the Tokyo National Museum depicting scholars playing *go* and Li Bai contemplating a waterfall, it becomes evident that there was an established repertoire of images that, variously combined, made possible a rich layering of allusion. Precluding the hackneyed production of later workshops, this sophisticated play of imagery, so marked in the Gerry screens, must surely have delighted as well as edified its succession of notable owners.



5. Vessel  
Otamadai type. Earth-  
enware. Middle Jōmon  
period, ca. 2500 B.C.  
H. 21 in. (53.3 cm)

# Aesthetic Traditions of Japanese Pottery

## Jōmon and Yayoi Ceramics

THE EARLIEST SURVIVING manifestations of Japan's aesthetic expression, the earthenware vessels of its neolithic age, have paradoxically been the most recently known and appreciated, even in Japan. Although there was some awareness of the highly decorated wares of the islands' earliest inhabitants during the eighteenth century, it was an American, the zoologist E. S. Morse, who in 1877 discovered the first group to be scientifically studied in a shell mound at Omori, which he is said to have spotted from a train while traveling between Tokyo and Yokohama. The descriptive term for the pottery, *jōmon*, meaning "cord-marked" in Japanese, has also been given to the neolithic culture of Japan, now believed to have prevailed from at least 10,000 B.C. to about 300 B.C. and even later in remote areas of the north. Subsisting on the usually abundant hunting and fishing of the heavily forested islands, these early inhabitants, living in small, independent tribal groups all over the Japanese islands, created utensils of an astonishing artistry in a wide variety of forms and decoration. Typical of the mid-Jōmon period (3000–2000 B.C.) are tall cylindrical vessels with wide-mouthed sculptural rims that defy functional explanation, suggesting an uninhibited impulse to elaborate, to make meaningful the wares of everyday and ritual use, which has marked Japanese ceramics to the present. The artistic sophistication of pottery throughout the several millennia in which this culture flourished is all the more remarkable for the simplicity of its ceramic techniques; the hand-built vessels of relatively unrefined clay were fired in open-pit kilns.



Vessels having a cylindrical form that rises to a swirling sculptural rim of coils and open circles (No. 5) are characteristic of the Otamadai type, found in Middle Jōmon sites along the coast of eastern Japan. Another vessel, which flares at its shoulder into two elaborately coiled ring handles (No. 6), is similar to later Jōmon finds in eastern Japan, at the Ubayama shell mound. Because they are usually found in dwelling and refuse sites, they are thought to have been storage jars. Fashioned with the sim-

6·Vessel  
Earthenware. Late  
Middle to Late Jōmon  
period, ca. 2000 B.C.  
H. 18 in. (45.7 cm)



ple means of building up the body with coils of unrefined clay, they were then decorated with all-over patterns impressed in the half-dried clay with matted fibers or string wrapped around bamboo rollers. The variety and inventiveness of decoration, though of unknown purpose, reveals an intense aesthetic focus on utilitarian wares.

Jōmon culture persisted longest in eastern and northern Japan. The small, finely fashioned jar excavated in Hokkaido (No. 7) is of the Kamegaoka type. Typical of Late Jōmon vessels, its compact form is care-

fully modeled and decoration conforms to the vessel shape. Here, the impressed patterns have been embellished with swirling curves carved into the body. The evenly rounded lip and the careful lines that encircle the lower body, setting off the decorated zone, suggest that at this stage a simple turntable was used.

The Yayoi stage of Japanese culture (ca. 250 B.C.–A.D. 250) was initiated by an influx of people from the continent who brought with them the first of several waves of formative influences from outside the Japanese islands. When wet-field rice cultivation and bronze and iron metallurgy were introduced, probably from Korea, the isolated and self-sufficient Jōmon people gave way to a communal society organized to carry out the demanding agricultural cycle. Yayoi vessels vividly reflect this transformation from a primitive hunting and fishing culture to a more conservative agrarian society. Jōmon vessels with exuberant forms reminiscent of reptilian or animal life are superseded by vessels of finely articulated, more purely functional shape, such as the jar that rises from a small flat base to a bulbous but graceful body with long neck opening to a carefully everted lip (No. 8). Characteristically, decoration is restrained; even lines decorating the neck and lip accentuate the graceful, functional form.



#### 7 • Jar

Earthenware. Kamegaoka type, excavated in Hokkaido. Latest Jōmon period (10,000 B.C.–ca. 250 B.C.), ca. 500 B.C. H. 4½ in. (11.4 cm)

#### 8 • Jar

Earthenware. Excavated in Okayama Prefecture. Yayoi period (ca. 200 B.C.–A.D. 250). H. 13 in. (33 cm)



## Early Ash-Glazed Wares

UNTIL THE ADVENT of the final stage of Japan's prehistory, an epoch named Kofun (the Japanese term for the huge tomb mounds of the ruling aristocracy, ancestral to the present imperial line), all ceramics were low-fired earthenware. Increasing contacts with the civilizations of ancient Korea, especially Paekche and Kaya, by the military Kofun culture that assumed hegemony over the agricultural peoples of

Yayoi by the middle of the third century A.D. brought advanced ceramic technology, the foundation of what would become one of Japan's most distinctive wares: high-fired ash-glazed pottery. By the end of the Kofun period, in the sixth century, the techniques for producing a high-fired ware similar to that initially imported from Korea for ritual use were well established. Inheriting a ceramic tradition that had originated in the coastal Longshan culture of China around 2000 B.C. and spread during the fourth century to the Korean peninsula, Japanese



### 9 • Jar

Gray Pottery. Excavated near Okayama City. Sue ware. Kofun period (ca. A.D. 250–552), ca. A.D. 500. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm)

potters under the tutelage of Korean immigrants produced for some seven hundred years, from the mid-fifth century, ceramics initially for palace and ritual use known as Sue ware.

Sue ware is characterized by a thin-walled, hard, bluish gray body formed on a potter's wheel (used for the first time in Japan), which allowed the wares to be efficiently produced in standardized shapes and quantities. Storage jars are common shapes, as are bowls on pedestals similar to Korean wares that reflect their original cer-

emonial function. The Sue vessel in the Gerry Collection (No. 9) is a particularly fine example of this type, with extensive accidental glazing on the upper body and on the inside of the vessel.

The Gerry flask (No. 10) is a distinctive, flattened shape of Sue ware that appeared only in the sixth century. This example has extensive ash glazing of a lovely green that is particularly prized.

Early Sue ware of the fifth and sixth centuries is close to Korean prototypes and was produced in an *anagama*, the single-cham-



10 . Flask

Gray pottery with natural-ash glaze. Sue ware. Early Nara period (646–710). H. 10½ in. (26.7 cm)

ber tunnel-shaped kiln newly introduced in the area of Suemura in present-day Osaka, the capital region of the ruling Yamato chieftains. From there, it was dispersed throughout Japan. By the late sixth century, the new technology had spread to several provincial areas, which in turn produced for utilitarian use as well their own Sue wares from the seventh to the twelfth century.

The finely shaped jar with straight rim and sharply tapered shoulder that extends in a gracefully rounded form to an everted foot (No. 11) is characteristic of the ninth-century wares that were produced in a number of local kilns. This piece is notable as well for its evenly distributed green-ash glaze, which also covers the interior.

During the early Heian period, the ninth and tenth centuries, kilns in the area of Sanage, near present-day Nagoya, established a superior ash-glazed Sue ware that initiated the long ceramics history of the Seto region, which flourished throughout the medieval period and remains today one of the main ceramics production areas of

Japan. Techniques to fire the white clay available there in an oxidizing atmosphere rather than in the reduction firing that gives Sue ware its characteristic gray body made these wares distinctive for their light-colored bodies. The sturdy jar with gracefully articulated lip on a tall neck (No. 12) is said to have been excavated in Sanage. The olive-brown ash glaze that spills over the pale gray body was perhaps intentionally applied. The potters at Sanage soon learned to exploit the effects of accidental ash glazing by applying it before firing, in an attempt to achieve the effects of the prized celadons of Song China, which were treasured articles at the Heian court. Although Sanage wares were less precious than the imported celadons, their use was nevertheless limited to the upper strata of Japanese society. They are excavated mainly from temple and palace sites in the capital areas of Nara and Kyoto.



#### 11 • Jar

Gray pottery with natural-ash glaze. Sue ware. Heian period [794–1185]. H. 6¾ in. (17.2 cm)

12 • Jar

Pottery with natural-ash glaze. Excavated in Sanage.  
Heian period (794–1185), 9th century. H. 9 in.  
(22.9 cm)



13 • Jar for sutra  
burial

Pottery with natural-ash  
glaze. Tokoname ware.  
Late Heian period (898–  
1185), 12th century.  
H. 10 in. (25.4 cm)

## Ko Seto and Tokoname Wares

THE ANCIENT KILNS of Tokoname are among the oldest provincial kilns in Japan, situated in the Chita Peninsula near present-day Nagoya, not far from the Heian-period kilns at Sanage. From the twelfth to the fourteenth century, the principal products were heavy stoneware jars with accidental glazing, such as the tall-shouldered high-necked jar (No. 13). The dignified form of this jar, together with its distinctive decoration of three grooves ringing the body at even intervals, is characteristic of jars made at Tokoname to hold sutras, which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries were buried in bronze cylinders at sacred sites all over Japan. Unlike the vitrified pottery of Sue ware, made according to Korean-inspired techniques of forming the body on a rotating wheel, the thick, coarse body of the Tokoname jar was built up with coils of clay and the shape formed on a turntable to which the vessel was adhered with sandy quartz, visible on the flat base.

The heavy layers of kiln-fused ash glaze in ethereal colors ranging from iridescent pale blue to vernal tones of green, which drip over the straight neck and the shoulder to grace the warm-chestnut-colored body, evoke the fierce, purifying heat of the wood-fired *anagama* in which these vessels were fired. Recent investigations of the more than one thousand kilns in the Tokoname area reveal that they were usually clustered in groups of forty-five to one hundred kilns. According to Yoshiharu Sawada, they were situated in accordance with ancient principles of astrological and directional divination. The religious wares

of the Tokoname kilns were connected with the Tendai Buddhist temple at Mount Hiei, where the cult of sutra burial in anticipation of the millennial reappearance of the Buddha was centered. The practice of hand-copying sutras began there in the ninth century. Sutra burial at sacred sites, related to the practice of mountain asceticism known as Shugendō, gained momentum during the eleventh century and had spread throughout Japan by the twelfth. It was during the late Heian period, when increasing political disorder heralded the usurpation of power from the court by provincial military clans and natural disasters confirmed the Buddhist cosmological concept of *mappō* (the age of the degeneration of Buddhist law), that sutra burial and the associated production of such jars were at their height. A three-grooved jar similar to the example shown here was excavated at the Imayama shrine in Kyoto, beneath a four-faced stone incised with Buddhist images and a date corresponding to 1125.

The florescence in the late twelfth century of the kilns at Seto, the most important of several regional kilns that laid the foundation of medieval ceramics, coincided with the transfer of power from the imperial court at Heian-kyō to the *bakufu*, or military government, at Kamakura, after the victory of the Minamoto clan in the late-twelfth-century Gempei wars. Land in the Seto area was controlled by the Hōjō clan, regents to the *bakufu* which, in an attempt to secure its regime against enervation by the aesthetic pursuits associated with the old nobility, turned for its spiritual and cultural inspiration to the art of Song China, introduced by Chinese monks who had established the first Zen temples in Kamakura. The monks brought with them







14 · Jar in *meiping* shape with incised  
floral design

Brown iron glaze. Ko Seto ware. Kamakura period  
(1185–1333), 14th century. H. 10½ in. (26.7 cm)



15 · Flower vase with stamped design of lotus

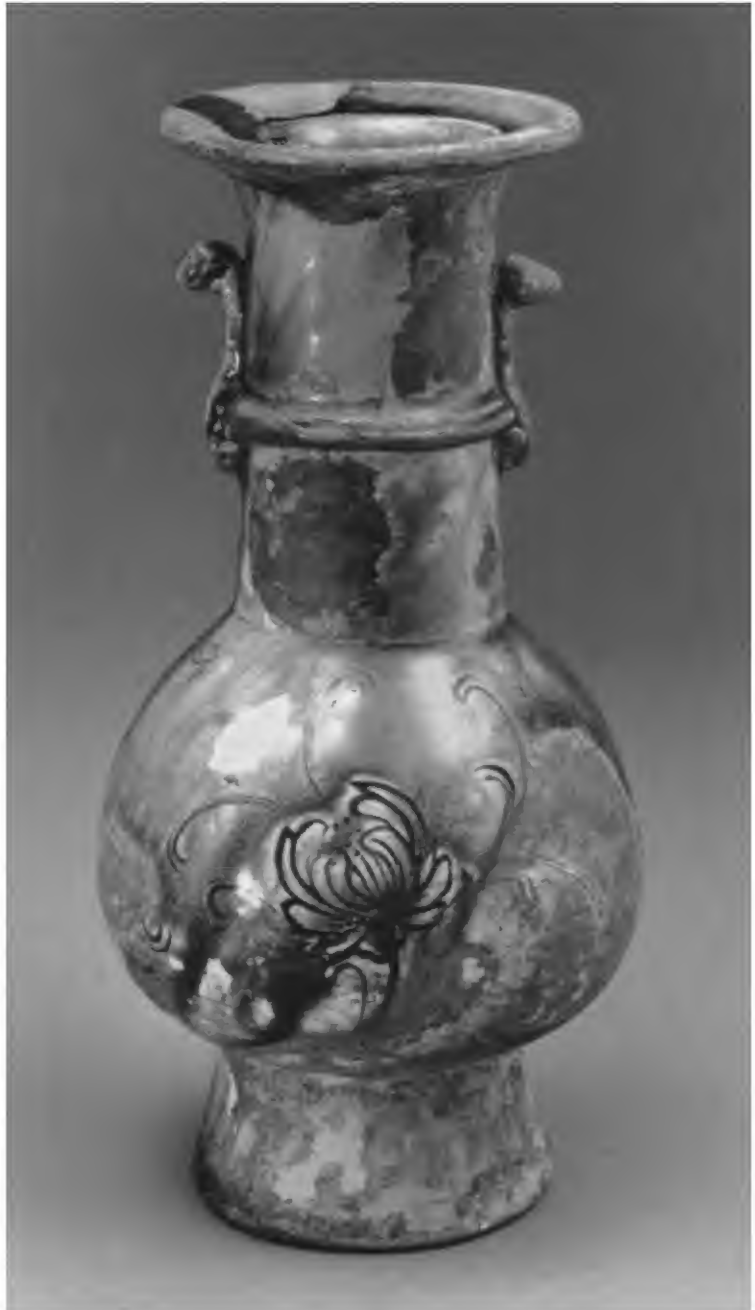
Brown iron glaze with accidental blue streaks. Ko Seto ware. Kamakura period (1185–1333), 14th century. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm)

not only spartan spiritual ideals but also the luxury wares of Southern Song, on which the distinctive repertoire of Ko Seto (Old Seto) shapes was modeled.

Until the early fifteenth century, Seto was the major source in Japan for high-quality glazed ceramics based on the white-and-green-glazed ceramics of Southern Song China. Among the principal new shapes produced were the high-shouldered, narrow-necked jars based on the *meiping* shape in Song porcelain and the celadons of Korea's Koryo dynasty. Distinctive amber-brown iron glazes were developed at Seto, such as that which covers the freely incised floral design on the vessel in the Gerry Collection (No. 14). In its compact, vigorous form and bold design, this example beautifully evokes the spirit of the new age of Kamakura. The neck has been covered with brown lacquer to repair the damaged neck, originally twice its present height and having a projecting flange at midpoint. Archaeological finds indicate that in Japan such vessels were used as cinerary urns and in shrines as offering flasks for sake.

Another important Chinese shape characteristic of Ko Seto ware is that of the flower vase (No. 15). Many such vases were made for floral offerings in Buddhist temples; the stamped design of the lotus is symbolic of that function. In this example, the glaze only partially adheres to the form, a vestige of burial at the kiln site.

So important were the Chinese-inspired wares of the medieval Seto kilns that, although concentrated in the regions of Minamoto power in the east, they were widely distributed throughout Japan.



## Medieval Storage Jars

DESPITE THE DEVELOPMENT of large-scale production of glazed wares at Seto during the Kamakura (1185–1333) and Muromachi (1392–1568) periods, at other provincial kilns the predominant and persistent tradition was of high-fired stonewares, glazed naturally by the flux of flue-driven ash on molten clay. These kilns supplied utilitarian wares to an agrarian people, but they eventually contributed to the aesthetic bias that informs the appreciation of Japanese ceramics to the present day. A limited range of functional shapes—large narrow-mouthed jars, wide-mouthed jars, and mortars—were produced at the various regional kilns, which shared production techniques of hand-building by coiling and finishing on a wheel vessels that were fired to stoneware hardness in long, single-chamber kilns. The vessels that served the needs of agrarian life as water or wine containers, seed jars, or sometimes cinerary urns are graced by the idiosyncratic charms of local clays fired in wood-fueled kilns. These vessels of unique and earthy loveliness were produced by unpredictable interactions of clay, fire, and climate. A sophisticated appreciation of the rustic beauty of such unglazed stoneware, collectively termed *yakishime*, developed later within the tradition of *cha no yu* (the tea ceremony) during the second half of the sixteenth century. From the Momoyama period (1568–1615) to the present, the values and aesthetics of Japan's medieval rural society have been kept alive in the continuing appreciation and high-quality production of these wares.

At Shigaraki, southeast of Kyoto in Omi Province, unglazed pottery had been produced from the Kamakura period. Simple, rugged vessels fashioned with local clay, heavy in feldspar and lacking much iron, when fired in the customary oxidizing atmosphere emerged from single-chamber *anagama* miracles of tactile beauty—variegated reddish orange covered with bursts of iron, quartz, or other impurities—made exquisite by the whitish to green-ash glaze mantling the strong forms. The large storage jar (No. 16) maintains a grand vigor perhaps more poignantly for its several repairs and losses. Its bulbous form, rising

majestically from a small but sturdy base, is one of the most lovely of the early Muromachi products of Shigaraki. The natural-ash glaze, blown over the copious shoulder to flow dramatically in a deepening green rivulet to the base, enhances the dramatic strength in a pleasing harmony of natural earth tones.

West of Kyoto, the Tamba area was another active medieval ceramics center. Its clay, redder and finer than that of Shigaraki, fired a deep earthy red, and its storage vessels are characteristically covered with brilliantly variegated green-ash glazes. Few are as eloquent as jar No. 17. It was fired to near vitrification under successive layers of ash, which flow copiously from its gracefully sloping shoulder and neatly collared neck. The flux of deepening greens over the pale iridescent base contrasts with the glassy red surface.

A jar of similar function (No. 18b), made perhaps a century later in similar circumstances, demonstrates the variety possible, as well as the vagaries of production quality. Typical of Tamba ware of the later Muromachi period, this jar was also hand-built by coiling, but fine comb markings that circle the body indicate a more mechanical method of finishing the shape. Such techniques led to a more standardized product, but the vessels lacked the individual attention that gives such impressive vitality to the earlier Tamba jar (No. 17). In this jar, the ash glaze falls in thick ribbons that stop just below the shoulder. The neatly rolled lip is characteristic of sixteenth-century jars at Tamba, as well as of jars at other provincial kilns.

A comparable jar from Bizen (No. 18c), one of the most important provincial kilns near Okayama on the coast of the Inland Sea, is of similar date and function to No. 18b. The highly refractory local clay, fired at high temperatures in kilns kept burning for several weeks, emerged with a distinctive brownish red surface. This sturdy vessel is ornamented with a simple combed-wave pattern around its shoulder typical of Bizen ware, which sets off the rugged horizontal ridges of its coil-built form. During the firing, the neck and upper shoulder were covered to leave the upper portion unglazed. Later, a similar reserve technique was often used at Bizen. Known as *hi-dasuki*, it involved wrapping parts of the vessel in rice

16 • Storage jar

Stoneware with natural-ash glaze. Shigaraki ware.

Muromachi period (1392–1568), 14th–15th century.

H. 16 in. (40.6 cm)







straw. As the rice burned off during firing, these areas were exposed to an atmosphere of reduced oxygen, which produced random patterns. The conspicuous mark in the shape of the letter A on the lower body may be that of the potter, or is perhaps the imprint of the lot to which the vessel belonged. Both possibilities reflect the large production of such vessels at Bizen.

Wide-mouthed jars were the other major product of the rural kilns. The small Tamba jar decorated with combed designs and intentionally splashed with an ash glaze

prior to firing (No. 18a) typifies the kind of utilitarian ware that came to be appreciated and used in *cha no yu* by the mid-sixteenth century. This pot, made about 1650, was later fitted with a lacquered lid to serve as a *mizusashi*, the jar from which fresh water is taken for the preparation of tea.

Iga, close to Shigaraki, was a ceramics-producing area from Heian times, and until the late Muromachi period its wares are hardly distinguishable from those of Shigaraki. But with the revolution in taste directed by the tea masters of the late six-



17 • Storage jar

Stoneware with natural-ash glaze. Tamba ware. Muromachi period (1392–1568), ca. 1400. H. 18 in. (45.7 cm)

18a • Jar adapted for use as a *mizusashi*

Stoneware with natural-ash glaze. Tamba ware. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 7 3/4 in. (19.7 cm)

18b • Storage jar

Stoneware with natural-ash glaze. Tamba ware. Muromachi period (1392–1568), ca. 1500. H. 14 in. (35.6 cm)

18c • Storage jar

Stoneware. Incised potter's mark in shape of A near foot. Bizen ware. Muromachi period (1392–1568), ca. 1500. H. 13 in. (33 cm)



teenth century, when simple rustic wares of the local kilns began to replace precious utensils imported from China, Iga, like Shigaraki and Bizen, was revitalized by special commissions of local daimyo and Kyoto tea masters. No. 19 is a fascinating reflection of this transition in the nature of Iga ware. A storage jar, perhaps for tea leaves, it derives from the utilitarian tradition, though it possesses a telling elegance of shape. A near-perfect cylinder ending in a smaller base and having a straight neck

with finely rolled lip, it is a large version of a contemporary tea-caddy shape found at Mino and Karatsu. Its glassy surface, a warm chestnut brown finely pitted with bursts of quartz and covered with a variegated, milky green natural-ash glaze, offers the warm rusticity and tactile richness so consciously cultivated by Momoyama teamen.



19 • Storage jar  
Stoneware with natural-  
ash glaze. Iga ware.  
Momoyama period  
(1568–1615), ca. 1600.  
H. 12½ in. (31.8 cm)

## Karatsu, Kyoto, and Mino Wares

JAPANESE POTTERY underwent a definitive phase of development in the middle of the sixteenth century, when the aesthetic ideals of *cha no yu* were being formulated in Kyoto. It was at this time, under the influential personality of the tea master Sen no Rikyū (1521–1591), that the philosophies of his predecessors Murata Jukō (1422–1502) and Takeno Jō-ō (1502–1555) were distilled to create a form of *cha no yu* that synthesized the literary and aesthetic ideals of the Kyoto aristocracy with the frugality and simplicity espoused by Zen teachings. Rikyū's rejection of elaborate tea gatherings for the display of precious Chinese utensils in favor of an appreciation both of the unpretentious forms of nature and of rural life, its architecture as well as its forthrightly functional utensils, exerted a lasting influence on the development of Japanese ceramics. Among the most revered objects within the cult of sophisticated rusticity exemplified by Rikyū's taste were the strong and natural forms of Korean wares for everyday use. As advisers to the most powerful military men of the time, teamen set the aesthetic mode

### 20 • Jar

Stoneware with painted decoration in underglaze brown iron. Karatsu ware. Momoyama period (1568–1615). H. 4½ in. (11.4 cm)



for the entire samurai class, some of whom sought to achieve distinction by returning with prized objects from the disastrous Korean invasions directed by Hideyoshi from 1592 to 1598. They even induced entire families of potters, who were then resettled and patronized by local daimyo, to return with them. The Korean potters introduced a new type of fast-spinning kick wheel, which freed both hands for pulling up the forms from spinning clay, and the *noborigama*, or multichamber climbing kiln, which provided greater control at higher temperatures than did the single-chamber tunnel kiln.

The earliest Korean-style kilns were established in the Karatsu area by the feudal lord of the region, who was active in trade with the coastal towns of Korea. An early example of the unaffected strength of Korean-style wares that so refreshed the sensibilities of Momoyama aesthetes is the small glazed jar with simple decoration in underglaze iron (No. 20). The casual brushmarks may be no more than an illiterate potter's attempt to render the character *dai* (大), meaning "great," but they titillate the imagination with suggestions of birds (or flowers) on a jar that fits easily and naturally within the hand. In such unaffected nonchalance is its charm; its quiet dignity lies both in the sober perfection of its wheel-thrown form and in the finely crackled glaze, applied with a practiced assurance to leave exposed the warm brown crepelike surface of the hard stoneware at the footed base.

In the aesthetic appreciation of such unpretentious utilitarian wares, Rikyū and his followers developed an extreme sensitivity to the individual and irregular aspects of a given piece. An outgrowth of this sensibility was the practice of personally commissioning or even making utensils, especially bamboo tea scoops and *raku* teabowls. *Raku* is a type of hand-modeled teabowl that has been made in Kyoto for generations following Chōjirō (1516–1592), a tile maker who made teabowls for Rikyū. These were coated with a thick lead glaze, mainly of Rikyū's preferred black, but also of red, during the Tenshō era (1574–1591), when Rikyū's ideal of frugal elegance prevailed. The preparation and drinking of frothy green tea in the ample handmade *raku* bowls became a classic Jap-





21 • *Raku* teabowl  
in the style of  
Kōetsu

Pottery with *raku* lead  
glaze. Edo period (1615–  
1867), 17th century.  
D. 5 in. (12.7 cm)

anese pleasure, and the making of *raku* ware was not only the profession of the hereditary line of the Raku family in Kyoto but also a pastime of cultivated amateurs. Its simple technique of hand-shaping, glazing in a lead solution, and firing in a small single-chamber kiln that could be built in an ordinary garden made it the ideal practice for the connoisseur of the natural and personal aspects of art. Chōjirō's revered creations have been continuously emulated, transmitting to the present day a sensitivity to the weight of the bowl in the cupped hand, to variations of color harmonies in the muted red, white, or black glazes, and to the feel of the lip of the bowl when drinking—a sensitivity only recently acquired in the West. Such teabowls may well have inspired the description by the Italian Jesuit Alessandro Vagliano, who was in Japan in 1574 and 1575, of the incomprehensible Japanese passion for the practice of *cha no yu*:

As a result of the addiction to *chaa* they greatly treasure certain pieces and vessels used in the *cha-no-yu* (tea ceremony). The cups in which they serve the brewed *chaa* are very small but made of a certain quality recognized by the Japanese. They are prized beyond belief—The Daimyo of Bungo showed me an earthenware cup for which he paid nine thousand silver taels which amounts to fourteen thousand ducats. Now to speak the truth I would not have given for it a couple of mavavedis [farthings] and we would not know what to do with it in Europe except to put it in a song bird's cage as a drinking vessel... To be esteemed then, cups and vessels must have been made by certain ancient masters, and among a thousand similar cups the Japanese immediately recognize the one with the master's touch—a gift which I think no European could ever acquire.\*

Four hundred years later, one still hears similar responses to Japanese tea wares, but even the untutored Western eye must suc-

\* Quoted in Soame Jenyns, *Japanese Pottery* (New York: Praeger, 1971), pp. 125–26.

cumb to the charms of the *raku* bowl presented here (No. 21). Even without the full pleasure of taking it in hand to drink, one senses the comforting texture and weight of the bowl, the touch of its carefully modeled rim on the lip. The pale salmon and muted gray tones of the crackled glaze, deeply veined by painstaking repair in gold lacquer—attesting to its having been greatly cherished—offer rich visual pleasure. Among the amateurs associated with *raku*, by far the most celebrated is Hon'ami Kōetsu (1558–1637), who fully explored in his wares the range of expressive possibilities of form, color, and texture. The Gerry teabowl, the work of an unknown aspirant to this tradition of personal expression in ceramics, is reminiscent of several of Kōetsu's famous red *raku* bowls, and succeeds marvelously in reflecting the aesthetic feeling of the Momoyama era.

During the Momoyama period, certain provincial kilns received specific commissions for *cha no yu* utensils. At Mino, near Seto, potters in the last quarter of the sixteenth century developed the first white-glazed wares with painted decoration in Japan, perhaps in response to the cobalt-decorated porcelains imported from China. Later called Shino, these were highly appreciated as tea utensils and as dishes for serving food. A thick feldspathic glaze that fired a milky white over iron slip decoration of simple, natural motifs was used on wheel-thrown or sculpted vessels, such as the serving bowl on three loop feet (No. 22). The softly fluted rim frames a bowl with an image of arresting harmony: a stalking egret in encircling reeds. The appeal of the tactile glaze and idiosyncratic form influenced the wares made at Karatsu in the beginning of the seventeenth century.

At Karatsu, the earliest source of unpretentious Korean-style bowls that appealed to tea enthusiasts, certain kilns began to produce wares specifically for *cha no yu* in the late Momoyama period. There is an unprecedented sophistication in the *mukōzuke*, or squared food dish (No. 23), made for the *kaiseki* meal preceding a formal tea. Willow branches and spring wild flowers, deftly painted in underglaze iron, mark the four rounded sides shaped from a cylindrical wheel-thrown form smoothly squared off at the finely turned lip. Beneath the thin, crackled feldspathic glaze, the



22 • Serving bowl with decoration of heron in reed

Brown iron wash under feldspathic glaze. Mino ware, Shino type. Momoyama period (1568–1615), late 16th century. D. 6½ in. (16.5 cm)



23 • *Mukōzuke* with decoration of grass

Brown iron wash under feldspathic glaze. Karatsu ware. Momoyama period (1568–1615), ca. 1568–1600. H. 4½ in. (11.4 cm)

warm brown of the Karatsu clay harmonizes with the vivacious painted decoration. One side is distinguished as the principal one, to be presented to the guest, by a lovely overcoating of glaze that thickens to opaque white as it falls to the base of the cup. The appearance of such conscious artistry in an early-seventeenth-century Karatsu *mukōzuke* reflects a taste developed far from Kyushu, in the kilns at Motoyashiki in Mino.

It was not, however, simply a one-way trade of sophisticated tea taste from Mino but the dissemination of the Karatsu ceramic techniques that was to vitalize the stoneware tradition of Japan. By the late Momoyama period, from 1600 to 1630, the Korean-style *noborigama*, or multichamber climbing kiln, was introduced to the Mino area. With its capacity to fire great quantities of wares with various glazes, this new kiln type enabled potters to develop new styles of decorated ceramics that reflected a contemporary change of taste. The elegant simplicity of Rikyū's aesthetic, which remains classic in the schools of *cha no yu* descended from him, was at that time complemented by the more flamboyant taste of the era. A type of ware associated with Rikyū's follower Furuta Oribe (1544–1615), who rose to prominence as the arbiter of taste after Rikyū's death, is emblematic of the rich ferment of influences and ideas that mark the late Momoyama era. Although it is not known how directly Oribe was involved in the production of the shaped and decorated wares that take his name, they were produced at several Mino kilns and are distinctive for their bright-green copper glaze splashed over fields of painted decoration in underglaze iron beneath a clear glaze. The repertoire of motifs in Oribe wares includes—in addition to natural imagery such as the autumn grasses on the sake bottle (No. 24), which is shared with earlier Seto and Mino ware—many drawn from textile designs, and molded forms such as the dishes in the shape of arrow fletching (No. 25). It was possible to produce Oribe ware, with its inventive shapes, clear glazes, and precise painting in underglaze iron, only in the higher firing of the *noborigama*.

Among the many varieties of decoration that were developed in Oribe wares, Black Oribe is most commonly found on a particularly distorted shape called the shoe-

shaped teabowl. The example in the Gerry Collection (No. 26) was made with virtually the entire range of decorative techniques developed within this inventive ware. Floral and textile motifs were painted on the interior of the bowl and in two registers on the outside. The iron glaze was then ladled over the greater portion of the bowl to boldly frame the detailed decorations in a solid field of rich iron black. Pairs of vertical parallel lines, scratched through the glaze on the outside to the creamy white body, echo the painted horizontal lines of the interior design. Occasionally, Black Oribe teabowls are marked on the base, as is this one, with a two-stroke character, thought to be the identifying mark of the merchant Jōhachi, suggesting that these were designs made to order for a burgeoning Kyoto market in tea wares.

24 · Sake bottle with decoration of grasses

Brown iron wash under copper green and feldspathic glaze. Mino ware, Oribe type. Momoyama period (1568–1615), 17th century. H. 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (17.2 cm)





25 · Two footed  
dishes in the shape  
of arrow fletching  
Brown iron wash under  
copper green and feld-  
spathic glaze. Mino  
ware, Oribe type.  
Momoyama period  
(1568–1615), 17th cen-  
tury.  $2\frac{1}{4} \times 6 \times 4\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
(5.7 × 15.2 × 11.4 cm)



26 · Teabowl in the  
shape of a shoe  
Black iron wash under  
feldspathic glaze. Mino  
ware, Oribe Black type.  
Momoyama period  
(1568–1615). D.  $5\frac{1}{2}$  in.  
(14 cm)





27 . Inkstone with  
molded decoration  
of a gourd vine

Copper green glaze.  
Mino ware, Oribe type.  
Momoyama period  
(1568–1615), early  
17th century. L. 5 ½ in.  
(14 cm)



28 . Water dropper in the shape of a fish

Glazed stoneware. Mino ware. Momoyama period  
(1568–1615). W. 3 ½ in. (8.9 cm)

The inventive whimsy that characterizes the Momoyama products of Seto and Mino is delightfully evident in luxury items such as candlesticks, often in the form of comical European figures, or scholars' implements, of which only a few survive. In bold Oribe taste is the hand-sculpted inkstone (No. 27) bordered by a carving in relief of a melon vine glazed in the copper green typical of Oribe ware. A unique and ingenious feature of this type of inkstone is that it contains its own reservoir of water, which is filled through the hole in the melon and can be added as needed from a tiny opening near the well simply by tilting the inkstone forward.

However clever such Momoyama inventions, they did not preclude the use of water droppers, which were more conventionally used to moisten the slab for making ink. Since the Kamakura period, glazed water droppers in various shapes were made at Seto, but the beguiling dropper in the shape of a fish standing on its fins, with flipping tail and quizzical expression (No. 28), expresses the exuberant humor of the Momoyama age. It may well have been made at Mino rather than at Seto.

## Shōdai and Seto Wares

THE COMBINATION of *cha no yu* aesthetics and the controlled ceramic technology that bore its early fruit in the Momoyama age continued to inspire potters during the Edo period (1615–1867). The deliberately warped shape and splashed glaze of the Shōdai plate (No. 29), made for daily use, is characteristic of the earliest wares of the Shōdai kiln, begun in the seventeenth century in the foothills of Mount Shōdai, near

Kumamoto in Kyushu, under the aegis of the local daimyo, the Hosokawa, who were given that domain in 1632. These rare, early works assimilated the aesthetic of the natural irregularities of Korean wares in a playful technique that was continued at Shōdai throughout the Edo period. Typically, the dynamic effects on these coarse-bodied wares were achieved by dripping or ladling a straw-ash glaze over the basic iron glaze. Products of the Shōdai kiln are most numerous from the nineteenth century, and contemporary kilns continue the tradi-

### 29 · Plate

Stoneware with iron and straw-ash glaze. Shōdai ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 17th century.  
D. 11 3/4 in. (29.9 cm)



tion in plates and large vessels that are appreciated as folk art today.

Despite the strong influence of *cha no yu* on the production of Japanese ceramics, major kilns produced wares for general use in large quantities throughout the Edo period. At Seto, one of the most distinctive glazed pottery types is the *ishizara*, a large deep platter used for serving the simmered dishes that were the specialty of local inns and roadside teahouses. The vivacious humor and simplicity of design that evolved in the large production of these popular wares are amply evident in two dishes exhibited here. Sketched on one dish (No. 30) in pale cobalt and iron oxide are a droll pair of fish and, on the other (No. 31), an elegantly abstract design of a willow tree.

30 • Dish with  
decoration of fish

Stoneware with under-  
glaze blue and iron  
wash. 19th century.  
D. 10  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (27.3 cm)



31 • Dish with  
decoration of  
willow tree

Stoneware with under-  
glaze blue and iron  
wash. Seto ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867),  
early 19th century.  
D. 14  $\frac{1}{2}$  in. (36.8 cm)





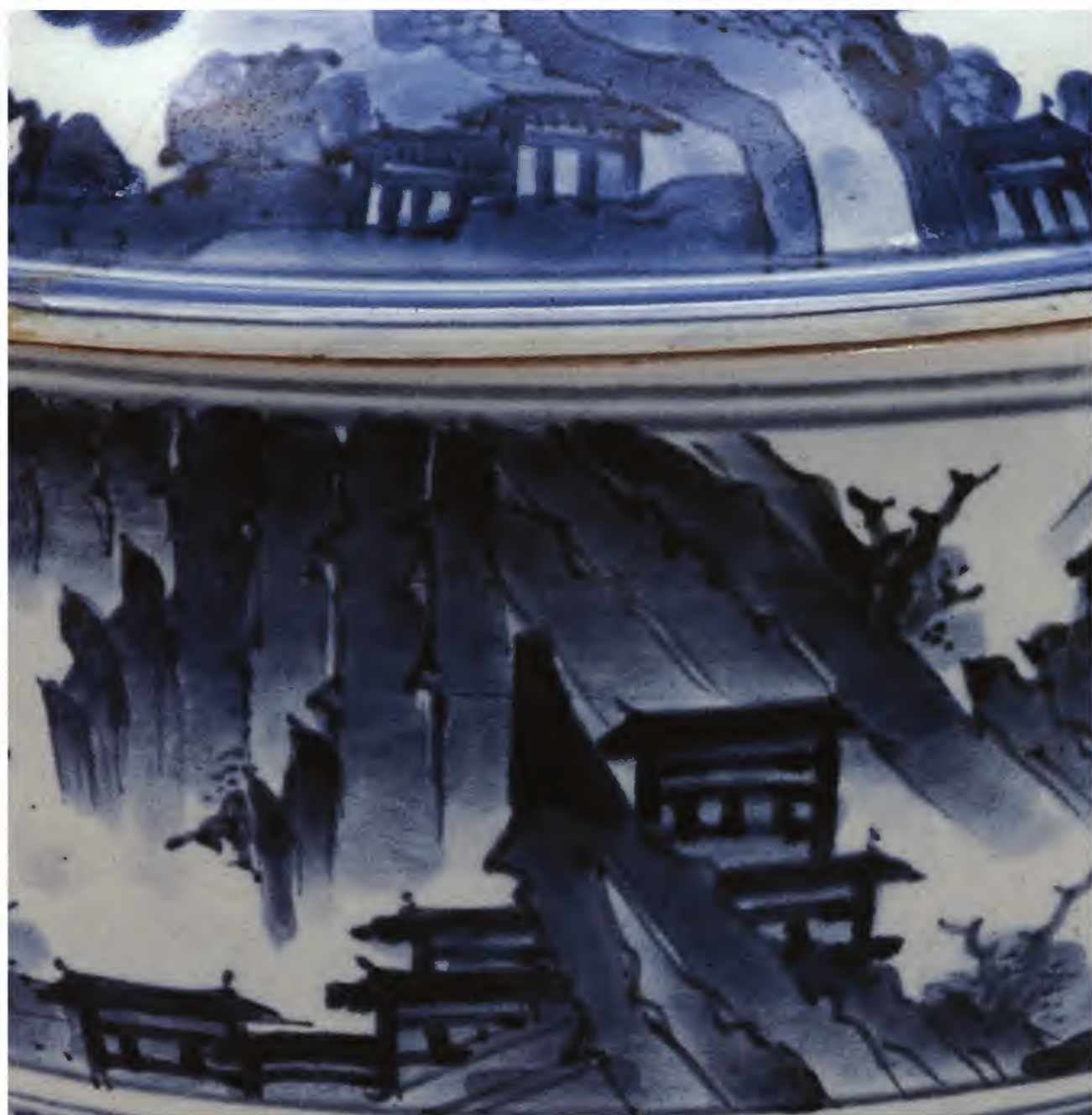
## Kyoto Ware

CERAMICS PRODUCED during the Edo period in the ancient capital at Kyoto range from the *raku* produced for tea masters to elegant and highly colored enameled wares of professional potters. The refined craftsmanship of the sake bottle in the shape of a paneled hexagon, decorated in an overall design of bamboo and flowering tree in brilliant blue, green, and gold enamels over a finely crackled glaze (No. 32), is typical of these latter products, often called Old Kiyomizu ware after the area around Kiyomizu temple in southeast Kyoto, where many of these distinctive and varied wares were produced. Japanese ceramics scholars have recently made a distinction between *kyōyaki*, or Kyoto ware, enameled pottery of the Edo period, and Kiyomizu, enameled wares made after the Meiji Restoration (1868). The design in thick brilliant-blue enamel of the Gerry Kyoto ware bottle is reminiscent not only of the technique but also of the elegant designs on lacquerware, another ancient craft of Kyoto. It is difficult to determine just when enamels began to be used on Kyoto ceramics, but their use is documented by the 1640s. Enameling in Kyoto may have developed independently of the enameled porcelains that were being perfected in the kilns at Arita in Kyushu. Certainly, the carefully molded shape in the gray, fine-grained, and plastic Kyoto clay and the colorful yet delicate and refined design on the Gerry bottle have deep roots in the craft and aesthetics of the old capital, in contrast to the Chinese-inspired enameled wares of the Arita area.



32 · Hexagonal sake bottle with decoration of flowering tree and bamboo

Stoneware with overglaze enamels and gold. Kyoto ware. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th–early 18th century. H. 7  $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (19.7 cm)



# Japanese Export Porcelain

PORCELAIN, A HARD, TRANSLUCENT, usually white ceramic developed in China as early as the seventh century, was imported into Japan from China in considerable quantities at least as early as the tenth century. Demand clearly outstripped supply, for it was quickly imitated. These imitations were not porcelaneous, but were of stoneware, a vitrified pottery made of clay. Thus, the Kamakura period wares of Seto often imitated northern Chinese celadons. However, it seems that in the middle and late sixteenth century, porcelain from China was not in great demand in Japan. Few shards of Chinese blue and white of the Jiajing (1522–1566) and early Wanli (1573–1620) periods have been found in Japan, and no such pieces appear to have been handed down in Japanese collections. This most strongly suggests that no porcelain was made in Japan at this period not from want of expertise but from lack of demand. Possibly this is because of the high appreciation that developed among sixteenth-century tea masters of stoneware as more suitable than porcelain for the tea ceremony.

Once a demand for porcelain—and for blue-and-white porcelain in particular—was created in the early years of the seventeenth century, kilns began to work to satisfy the demand. The porcelain body was first made in Japan in the years around 1610, in Karatsu stoneware kilns in Hizen Province, on the southern island of Kyushu. Shards found at Karatsu kiln sites west of the town now called Arita (more or less at the southern extremity of the Karatsu kiln area) suggest that the first Japanese porcelains were made in these kilns. Shards of stacks of small Karatsu stoneware dishes topped by a porcelain dish have been found at Mukaie-no-hara and Hara-ake kilns, proving that the kilns used for stoneware were also used for porcelain.

Much of the production of these kilns had before 1610 been stoneware painted in iron oxide under a transparent glaze in a swiftly executed, simple, and strong style partly learned from Korean immigrants. Around 1610, some Karatsu kilns in the Arita area, perhaps the best known of which is Tengudani, began to restrict their production to porcelain. Others continued to make both stoneware and porcelain, and new porcelain kilns were started. Increased production of porcelain was by no means a sudden development, but a gradual process resulting from supply meeting demand. There was certainly a demand for blue-and-white porcelain among the Japanese daimyo at least by 1616. The inventory taken at the death of the shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu lists hundreds of pieces of *sometsuke*, which are classified in the list as “pieces used for enter-

Detail

Large tureen and  
cover with land-  
scape design  
(No. 38)



aining." The word *sometsuke*, which simply means "underglaze blue and white," does not indicate whether the pieces were Chinese or Japanese. A Chinese origin would indicate a new demand for blue and white from China; a Japanese provenance would suggest a considerable sophistication in the new porcelain industry of Arita. In view of the variable quality of porcelain shards from the Arita kilns at this period, we have to assume that the blue-and-white porcelain prized by the shogun was probably Chinese.

Once the kilns in Arita began to make porcelain, blue and white seems to have been in greatest demand, though celadon and *temmoku* (iron-glazed) wares, and combinations of these techniques, were also made almost immediately. The style of painting was, at first, somewhat similar to the dashing brushstrokes of Karatsu, called in Japan the "Korean" style. By the 1620s and 1630s, however, a variety of new styles had made their appearance. These were more sophisticated, with geometric patterns or painterly landscape designs. They became so popular in Japan that the Chinese entered the market in competition with Arita, producing for sale in Japan the so-called Tianqi wares in the Chongzheng (1628–1644) and Shunzhi (1644–1661) periods.

By the 1640s, there were or had been some thirty-three kilns in Arita making blue-and-white porcelain. When porcelain production at Jingdezhen was halted as a result of civil war in China at the end of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), Arita was making porcelains of comparable quality. By the end of the 1640s, imports of Chinese porcelain to Japan had stopped and exports of Arita porcelain (mostly celadons) to Southeast Asia had begun. Perhaps noting this, the Dutch East India Company, which heretofore had shipped large quantities of Chinese porcelain around Asia and to Europe, turned to Japan for supplies.

At first, Dutch purchases were modest. In 1650, one hundred forty-five coarse dishes were bought for Tonkin. In 1653, orders were given for special shapes to be made for the apothecary's shop in Batavia, the Company's headquarters in the East—pots for salve (probably albarelli), as well as bottles. Shards of albarelli have been found at the Sarugawa and Shimoshirakawa kiln sites in Arita. The so-called gallipots are probably later. In 1657, some porcelain samples were sent to Holland. Presumably these were satisfactory, for in 1659 a huge order, of 64,858 pieces, was placed by the Dutch East India Company. The Arita kilns could not cope with orders of this size, particularly since many of the pieces were to be made in unfamiliar shapes—often of sizes greater than had been made at Arita before—and decorated in unfamiliar, Chinese styles. It took two years to fill the order, requiring a great reorganization of the kilns in Arita, evidence of which has been seen in recent excavations. Kiln-site material shows that many early kilns went out of production at this period, while new, very large kilns were started. The surviving kilns were greatly enlarged, and presumably workers were recruited from the defunct kilns specifically to make export wares. Eventually, there were some twelve kilns making export wares, while only one or two kilns continued to make porcelain for the domestic market.

The Dutch wanted what they knew they could sell—Wanli- and Transitional-style porcelains. Accordingly, they sent models, made of wood and presumably painted in Delft, to Japan to be copied. Inevitably, this process

produced some bizarre results, and Japanese porcelains of the period are often not a little eccentric, as they are in European shapes (often those of German stoneware) and painted in a hybrid style (No. 37a–d). Volker, in his indispensable collations of the Dutch shipping documents, was led, for lack of evidence to the contrary, to the conclusion that most early Japanese export porcelain was blue and white only. This assumption has now been corrected. In fact, blue and white, far from dominating the export market, was overtaken in Europe by the early colored enameled wares of Arita. Chinese enameled wares had been relatively rare in Europe before the fall of the Ming dynasty in 1644; nor were they to become widely available in Europe until well into the 1660s, when Jingdezhen was again able to enter the market in competition with Arita, which by then was dominant.

Enameled porcelain seems to have been produced initially at Arita in the 1640s. The techniques do not seem to have been learned from China, but possibly from Kyoto, where at this time brilliant blue-and-green enameled ware (No. 32) appeared for the first time.

Although both underglaze blue-and-white enameled porcelain continued to be made at Arita in the Wanli and Transitional styles for some years, new types evolved. Often such styles can be associated with a particular kiln or a particular enameling workshop, which were by no means always the same thing. Some enameling workshops seem to have worked with one kiln only, others to have used wares from several different kilns. Of these early enameled wares, some have been distinguished by their palettes. One is the yellow-and-green group, whose predominantly floral decoration is usually found on jars of somewhat rounded profile (No. 43). Another is the yellow-and-blue group, whose scenic patterns often involving houses with verandas seem to have appeared only on jars and bottles. Yet another style, one that led to the Kakiemon style, was made by a group of workers usually identified as ancestors of the Kakiemon family of today, and who were clearly enamellers before they became potters. The hallmark of their enameled ware is its translucent quality (No. 47). When, later, the Kakiemon kiln began, it made a very fine ware with a distinctive milky white body and glaze—called by the Japanese *nigoshide*—for which the best enamels were used, never with underglazed bodies (No. 49). The combination of underglaze blue and overglaze enamels was used, at this kiln, only on bodies of lesser quality.

It has been customary to identify all the Arita wares that have Kakiemon-like enamels as “Kakiemon.” But in view of the vast numbers of such pieces exported to Europe, this is clearly untenable, since a single kiln could not possibly have produced such quantities. Other kilns or enameling workshops were clearly imitating Kakiemon. Indeed, shards of *nigoshide* have been found at other sites, while certain so-called Kakiemon enameled pieces exhibit deviations from the norm. In some cases, this is a matter of style; a good example is jar No. 55, with its decoration of flowering chrysanthemum and cherry. In other cases, it is a matter of small variations in the colors of the enamels, for example, No. 51, a pair of the so-called Hampton Court vases, which are usually painted in a palette that includes overglaze brown. It seems evident that the Kakiemon had contemporary rivals.

The rise of the Kakiemon style in Arita occurred simultaneously with the

emergence of other, often coarser, styles. These are usually grouped together as "Imari," named after the port through which they were shipped to Nagasaki, while the blue-and-white wares are usually called "Arita." This division is arbitrary and inaccurate, as both blue-and-white wares and pieces intended for enameling were often made in the same workshop and fired together. Many Imari styles are of high quality, though most are less refined, reflecting European demand at the lower end of an expensive price scale.

Some Imari wares are markedly distinct in their palette of enamel, which sometimes covers the entire body. These have usually been called "Kutani," on the supposition that they were made at the Kutani kilns of Kaga, three hundred miles north of Arita on the northwest coast of the main island of Honshu. But excavations at Kutani indicate that few, if any, of the wares called Kutani were made there, while excavations at Arita demonstrate that at least some of the so-called Kutani wares were made in Arita in the seventeenth century (No. 77). The attribution of Kutani wares continues to be merely informed guesswork, as the word "Kutani" is used to describe pieces made in several different places over a period of some three hundred years.

The Nabeshima family, the hereditary daimyo of Hizen, had not supported the Tokugawa at the battle of Sekigahara (1600), which established the power of the Tokugawa shogunate, and had continuing difficulty finding favor with them. Always short of money, they developed a thriving porcelain industry to help their finances. Porcelain not only brought in money, it also served as gifts so necessary within the Tokugawa feudal system. To this end, certain kilns seem to have been particularly favored by the Nabeshima family. Documentary sources give conflicting evidence on this point, and the suggestion that kilns at Iwayakawachi and Nangawara were the first of these "official" kilns is not borne out by kiln-site material. At the end of the seventeenth century or the beginning of the eighteenth, the Nabeshima family transferred its patronage to a kiln at Ōkawachi, in a mountain valley a few miles north of Arita, where a distinctive ware restricted to their own use was produced.

These wares are the Nabeshima porcelains. They are distinctive in both style and quality. Generally, they were made as dishes, of three sizes (No. 90), though there are other shapes as well, such as cups (Nos. 88, 89). The earlier pieces (sometimes called Matsugatani wares) seem to have been unusually shaped, and were common in many Arita kilns. The dishes are finely made, and most have a continuous, shallow catenary curve with an up-curving rim (No. 90). Backs are usually decorated with three similar motifs, often a cash pattern; there is nearly always a comb pattern on the tall vertical foot. Overglaze decoration is confined to the well and usually fills in an underglaze blue outline, a technique that virtually never occurs elsewhere on Arita wares.

Huge quantities of porcelain from Japan were shipped by the Dutch and by the Chinese from 1660 to the middle of the eighteenth century. By the 1670s, the Chinese kilns were again competitive, but the demand for Japanese porcelain had been created and was exploited by both nations. The Dutch supplied much of Southeast Asia and the Near East, as well as the Netherlands and other countries in Europe. The Chinese sold Japanese porcelain in Amoy and other ports to the English, the French, and the Scandinavian East India Companies, and to other European nations. By the 1720s, the Chinese had usurped the

European market for Japanese porcelain to such an extent that they were selling Japanese-style Chinese Imari.

So successful was the Chinese entry into the European market that by about 1740, Japanese porcelain was no longer economically viable and the export of porcelain from Arita came to a virtual halt. One indication that there was some attempt to prevent this can be seen in the orders placed by the Dutch East India Company for European shapes made up in Arita, foreshadowing later orders for armorial porcelain from China. Even this effort failed to save Arita, and it is notable that of the designs of Cornelis Pronck (No. 98), only one was used in Japan, while several were used in China. Similarly, when in 1747 or 1748 the Walpole family wanted blue-and-white Kakiemon-style plates, they had to order them from China (No. 99).

The cessation of orders from the West of export porcelain caused an economic depression in Arita, and from about 1740 to about 1770 little porcelain was made, save that for a weak domestic market. Only the Ōkawachi kiln of Nabeshima was unaffected and continued, undisturbed, to produce high-quality porcelains for its specialized market.

Toward the end of the century, in the 1770s, there was a new demand for porcelain within Japan for domestic markets. This was predominantly for the blue-and-white wares, but the demand was great and several new kiln areas were developed. The Hasami and Kihara kiln areas near Arita were revived, while the Hirado kilns at Mikawachi (also nearby, but in the Matsuura, not the Nabeshima, family fief) began to produce what were to become the finest porcelains of the early nineteenth century (Nos. 99–103). In Kyoto, and in many smaller towns on Honshu and Shikoku, new factories were started. Arita was revived, and the great industry at Seto, which later became the largest porcelain-producing area of Japan, was begun in the first decade of the nineteenth century. The early part of the century was a time of economic gain, and much porcelain was made in styles that harked back to former times. But it was the impetus given by renewed export markets in the middle of the century that so radically changed the production of porcelain all over Japan. Admittedly, much that was made was poor in quality and worse in taste, but this was more the fault of the buyer than of the manufacturer. By the end of the Meiji period, around 1890, porcelains of superb quality were being made for a discerning connoisseurs' market of both Japanese and Western buyers and stimulated by international trade fairs, such as those held in Philadelphia in 1876 and in Paris in 1878. At the same time, however, wares of lesser quality, produced for the mass market, continued to give Japanese porcelain a bad name—from which it has taken a long time to recover.



## Shoki Imari

DURING THE FIRST HALF of the seventeenth century, the first stage of the production of porcelain at Arita, most pieces made were relatively small, and somewhat crude in both potting and decoration. Clearly, they were inexpensive wares, produced for domestic markets. Large pieces were difficult to make, as both the kilns and the kiln furniture were unsophisticated; even saggers were not much used until the second stage of production, perhaps in the 1630s. During the first stage, the size of the base of any given piece was determined by the diameter of the kiln stand, which in turn

### 33 · Dish with landscape decoration

Underglaze blue. Arita ware, early Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), first half of 17th century. D. 7 7/8 in. (20 cm)



determined the diameter of the dish or the height of the vessel.

Dishes of a flattened profile, sometimes with a slightly raised rim, are common among shard material from many different kilns working in the period around 1630–40. Patterns painted on such dishes vary from the purely geometric to birds and flowers or landscape, becoming more painterly with time (Nos. 33, 34).

Celadon is much more commonly found at Arita kiln sites than is suggested by the number of Arita celadons now known; celadon shards have been found at more than twenty-two Arita kiln sites. Celadons of large size, which have a striking resemblance to fifteenth-century celadons from Zhejiang Province, a ware made of light gray or greenish white porcelainous stoneware (No. 35), have been found at the Maruo site in western Arita, which dates to about 1640–60. Recently, shards have also been found at one kiln at Hasami (Mitsunomata) and one kiln near Ureshino (Fudōyama). As both these kilns are a little later than Maruo, it seems likely that they were continuing a trade begun at Arita.

The market for celadon was probably in Southeast Asia, and in fact many such dishes have been found in Sulawesi. It seems likely that they were made to satisfy a demand that had previously been supplied by Zhejiang. This could suggest that the Southeast Asian export trade preceded the Dutch trade in Arita porcelain; indeed, it may well have encouraged the Dutch to substitute Arita porcelain for Chinese porcelain following the collapse of the Ming dynasty in 1644, after which Chinese porcelain from Jingdezhen was unavailable.



34 · Dish with landscape decoration  
Underglaze blue. Arita ware, early Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1630. D. 7<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> in. (20 cm)



35 · Dish  
Porcelaneous stoneware with celadon glaze. Arita ware, early Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1640. D. 17 in. (43.2 cm)

## Arita Blue and White

WHEN THE DUTCH began to purchase porcelain from Japan, they ordered the nearest equivalent to what they had already been buying from the Chinese. Thus, blue-and-white plates and dishes were usually to be in the Wanli style, while closed shapes were usually to be in the Transitional style. The Wanli *kraakporselein* style normally has a border divided into twelve or more sections of at least two patterns, while the central

well has a pictorial motif that may be enclosed in a cartouche. Many varieties of this style were made in Arita, both in blue and white (No. 36c) and in enameled wares (No. 45). While the combination of central motif and sectioned border remained constant, in some examples Japanese motifs supplanted the original Chinese patterns. Plates of this type have been found at several kilns in Arita. Only at Hiekoba, Sarugawa, and Ōdaru kilns are shards found bearing the VOC monogram of the Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie, the



### 36a · Apothecary bottle with initials IVH

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), second half of 17th century. H. 9½ in. (24.1 cm)

### 36b · Apothecary bottle with initial M in laurel wreath

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), second half of 17th century. H. 9¼ in. (23.5 cm)

### 36c · Plate with monogram of the Dutch East India Company

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660. D. 12½ in. (31.8 cm)

### 36d · Apothecary bottle

Underglaze blue with overglaze enamels. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), second half of 17th century. H. 11 in. (27.9 cm)

### 36e · Apothecary bottle

Decorated in Holland with red-and-green enamels. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), second half of 17th century. H. 9½ in. (24.1 cm)



Dutch East India Company (No. 36c).

Closed shapes—bottles, mugs, jugs, and so on—were more commonly made in the so-called Transitional style (No. 37a–d). Many of the standard shapes of European stoneware and earthenware were ordered from the Arita kilns in the years following 1658. Models made of wood were sent from Holland to Batavia in the Dutch East Indies and thence to Deshima, the licensed trading center on a delta outside Nagasaki. Seventeenth-century documents tell us that these models were decorated, but not by

whom. It has to be assumed that they were painted in Delft, which would account for the somewhat bizarre misunderstandings that so frequently occur. The scenes represented are remarkably uniform; it is unlikely that they were made at only one kiln, and yet shards have been found only at Chōkichi-dani kiln site. Exaggeratedly elongated figures—perhaps sages and their attendants, for one appears to carry a lute—stand among bottlebrush trees and rocks that are so stylized as to appear striped (No. 37c). Where the pattern “joins”



37a • Tankard with decoration of scholars in a landscape

Underglaze blue with Dutch silver-gilt mount. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1670. H. 6¼ in. (17.2 cm)

37b • Ewer

Silver mounts by Adrian Brandt (Delft, 1660). Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660–80. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm)

37c • Cylindrical jar with decoration of scholars in a landscape

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 1660–90. H. 11¼ in. (28.6 cm)

37d • Ewer

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660–80. H. 11 in. (27.9 cm)

38 · Large tureen and cover, with landscape decoration

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. D. 10 in. (25.4 cm)



### 39 · Octagonal dish

Underglaze blue with brown enamel rim. Fuku mark on reverse. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D. 8 in. (20.3 cm)



at the back or at the handle, there is a vestigial waterfall. The almost cylindrical vase is described in the documents as a *rol-wagen*. Chinese versions are mentioned first in 1649, Japanese versions in 1663. Mugs and jugs were often mounted in Europe with silver, silver-gilt, or pewter lids, and the potters were instructed to make a hole at the top of the handle for the fixation of such lids (No. 37a,b).

One feature of this style is the so-called Dutch tulip pattern, which occurs on jugs and bottles (No. 37d). The origin of this design is obscure, since it bears little resemblance to a tulip. It came to Arita from the Chinese, and it may derive, however remotely, from Turkish Isnik wares of the fifteenth century.

The Transitional style occurred primarily in the 1660s and 1670s. A rare and exceptionally large covered tureen in this style (No. 38) is likely to have been made toward the end of the seventeenth century. When the Transitional style was revived in the eighteenth century, it was even more stylized (No. 39) and occurred primarily on plates, which was most uncommon earlier.

A variation of the Transitional style, probably dating slightly later, appears on mugs and jugs of a somewhat more refined

shape (No. 40). Similar scenes are depicted, but drawn in a less distorted style and divided by panels of *karakusa* floral scrolls.

Contemporary with the earlier Transitional-style decoration is a more Japanese style of boldly painted trees and flowers (No. 41). European shapes with European-style decoration are relatively uncommon in the early years of the export trade; there are, however, a few imitations of Westwald stoneware mugs (No. 42b), some of which have bosses modeled onto the body to imitate the raised flower heads of the German model (No. 42a).

Bottles of the round-bellied shape that derives from European glass have often been called gallipots, and are usually considered to be among the earliest exports from Arita. In fact, contemporary documents that describe them use the word *flasche*, which has the broad meaning of "bottle." It is unlikely that these particular bottles are as early as is generally thought. Sometimes they resemble early pieces in their decoration, either in blue and white or in enamels and blue and white, but more commonly the decoration is in a later style. Such bottles may bear European lettering, usually enclosed in a cartouche that may be a wreath, either on the side of the body or





40a • Jug

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 1660–90. H. 7¾ in. (19.7 cm)

40b • Ewer

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660. H. 11 in. (27.9 cm)



41 • Vase

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 18 in. (45.7 cm)

under the base (No. 36a,b). Such lettering is usually initials, which may represent a person, though the sacred IHS initials also occur. The initials IVH may refer to Jan van Hoorn, a servant of the Dutch East India Company who became governor-general of the Dutch East Indies in 1704 (No. 36a). One bottle bears a full name, that of a pastor whose name does not appear in the lists of servants of the VOC.

Bottles were also imported into Holland in the white. Usually these were then enameled in Holland in styles that incorpo-

rate a glorious mixture of baroque and chinoiserie (No. 36e). The enamel colors are characteristically dark and opaque. Tall-necked bottles in shapes unrelated to the gallipot must have been a major production of the Arita export kilns in the late seventeenth century and well into the eighteenth. The variety of shapes and sizes, let alone the variety of types of decoration, is extensive and clearly demonstrates their popularity over a long period of production. Most probably this was due as much to their durability as to their beauty.



**42a • Mug**

Stoneware. Westerwald, Germany. Mid-17th century.  
H. 7¼ in. (18.4 cm)

**42b • Mug, modeled on Westerwald mug**

Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1680.  
H. 5½ in. (14 cm)





43 · Potiche with decoration of chrysanthemums and a kirin

Overglaze enamel. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660. H. 11¼ in. (28.6 cm)

## Early Enameled Ware

ENAMELING MAY HAVE started in Arita before the beginnings of the export trade, but evidence is as yet lacking. It seems that the earliest Arita enamels included an overglaze blue. This would suggest that the Arita enamels do not derive from the Chinese, since blue enamels were not produced at Jingdezhen at this date. The early enamels of Arita were not uniform in color, although there was great variation within the colors, most of which were rather dark and opaque. In all probability, there were quite soon a number of workshops firing muffle kilns; the use of specific palettes at different workshops enables us to make some attempt at identification.

One of the outstanding groups employed a palette that is predominantly green and yellow, with a sparing use of red and aubergine. It is not known whether the workshops made the bodies on which they enameled, or whether these were bought by or supplied to them. Most examples of this palette occur on boldly bulbous jars of the shape of No. 43. Sometimes the painting is less vigorous and detailed than in this example, the decoration more sparse. Nevertheless, the type does seem distinctive, and we may tentatively identify such pieces as coming from one workshop, a workshop that must be among the direct ancestors of those which, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, produced the standard Ko Imari wares.

Among the early enamels of Arita, at least one group seems to be a forerunner of the classic Kakiemon wares. Most likely, the Kakiemon were painters before they were potters. The grand pieces in the so-



called Kakiemon palette of the late 1660s, the 1670s, and the early 1680s, while resembling in color later pieces that are found as shard material at the Kakiemon kiln site, are not themselves found as shards at the site. Rather, they seem to derive from the somewhat coarse Wanli-*kraak*-style dishes in dark opaque enamels with no underglaze blue (Nos. 44, 45). While the painting is reasonably good, the color is mediocre, though it bears a striking similarity to the Kakiemon palette.

A later stage in the pre-Kakiemon enameled group can be seen in the kendi (No. 46), which also lacks underglaze blue. The dec-

44 · Dish with decoration of peonies and bug on rock

Overglaze enamels. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1660. D. 8½ in. (21.6 cm)

45 · Deep plate

Polychrome enamels. Arita ware. Edo period  
(1615–1867), 1660–80. D. 12 $\frac{3}{4}$  in. (32.4 cm)



46 • Kendi

Polychrome enamels.  
Arita ware. Edo period  
(1615–1867), ca. 1670.  
H. 8½ in. (21.6 cm)



oration—some of which is stylized (on the neck and on the spout), some more painterly—is sparse and the enamels are translucent. This seems to be the formula that led to the Kakiemon style; here, it is handled with a formal simplicity that was not characteristic in later stages.

Parallel to the evolution of the quality of the enamels was the change in the quality of the body. If we are to regard the *nigoshide* body of the wares produced at the Kakiemon kiln as the peak of quality, we can try to identify pieces made in the intermediate stages. Such pieces are rare. But most likely it was the attempt to produce a whiter body and to eliminate, by the removal of excess iron, the bluish tinge of the glaze characteristic of the Arita kilns that led to the discovery of the *nigoshide*

method. Presumably, it was in this formative stage that the Kakiemon kiln was begun. Thus, we can probably associate the fine white body and glaze of the enamels that we call Kakiemon with the commencement of the kiln. Dish No. 44 seems to have been made at this stage, just before the beginnings of the kiln. The predominantly blue-and-green enamels relate it to other pieces of this date, most of which are large jars not having a white body, which further emphasizes its intermediate status.



## Kakiemon

IF WE CAN ACCEPT that, as suggested above, the Kakiemon were painters before they were potters, we can see that the Kakiemon kiln must have been started somewhere around 1680. This is supported by the absence of any early shards at the kiln site. In all probability, the kiln continued in production until the third or fourth decade of the eighteenth century.

Shard material from the kiln site is varied. As is the case with most Arita sites, among the most common shards are those that are blue and white, both ordinary Arita blue and white, and the so-called Kakiemon-style blue and white that derives its name from the enameled wares of the same kiln. Also found are shards of high-quality celadon wares; shards of blue-and-white wares, in which spaces have been left in the painting for later infill with enamel; and shards of *nigoshide*, which never bears underglaze decoration. This last body is often molded with a decoration that may later be painted over by the enameler. It is the finest and most purely white body and glaze made in the Arita area, though it was later to be rivaled at Hirado. Indeed, no other Oriental glaze is as white, with the exception of the *blanc de chine* wares of Dehua.

The *nigoshide* body is enameled only, and characteristically used only for bowls and other open shapes (No. 47). The style of decoration of these pieces is sparse and painterly, leaving wide areas uncovered to display the body to best advantage. Often they have a brown edge. Where blue and white are used in combination with overglaze colors (as they often are at the

Kakiemon kiln), the body is the standard Arita porcelain. It is also used for those pieces that are entirely blue and white (No. 48).

One of the great problems of the Kakiemon story is that closed shapes are rarely found among the shards from the kiln. Thus, it is by no means certain that the lobed teapot (No. 49) was actually made there. We can at present attribute pieces to the Kakiemon only by the palette of the enamels and by the style of the decoration.

Typical of the finer products of the Kakiemon style are the great figures of women. In a rescue excavation conducted in the summer of 1988 on the site of the former *aka-e-machi*, the enamellers' quarter, in central Arita, unstratified finds included at least two sets of three or more molds for making a Kakiemon-style *bijin* figure whose right hand rests at her waist and whose left hand holds her *uchikake*. These greatly resemble, if they are not identical to, the Gerry figure No. 50. It has not yet been determined whether these figures would have come from the molds, as the high shrinkage rate (about fifteen percent) makes it impossible to fit model to mold. Perhaps pulls will one day be taken.\*

No shards of such figures, or of other known Kakiemon-type pieces, have been found at the Arita *aka-e-machi*. This could be mere chance, as shards of figures are not commonly found there, but it is also possible that biscuit figures sent to the Kakiemon kiln to be fired were not

\*The excavation was conducted by the Arita Town Board of Education under the direction of Ozaki Yōko and Murakami Noboyuki, who so kindly shared their information with me and showed me the material. I am also grateful to Ōhashi Kōji and Igaki Haruo.

### 47 · Octagonal bowl with decoration of peonies and a lion

Overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. D. 9½ in. (24.1 cm)

### 48 · Deep plate with eight-lobed rim and decoration of birds, flowers, and insects

Underglaze blue. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. D. 9¾ in. (24.8 cm)



49 · Teapot in the shape of a melon, with floral decoration

Underglaze blue and overglaze enamels; modern silver lid; rim and hinge by Thome, New York. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. D. 8½ in. (21.6 cm)



returned to the *aka-e-machi* for decoration in enamel and for refiring, but were decorated and fired on the spot. (This might account for the marked difference in the enamel colors of standard Imari wares and those of the so-called Kakiemon types in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.) Nevertheless, these figures may be identified as Kakiemon, though we have little evidence of their date or of their provenance. To judge by the enamels, they must be later than the *Wrestling Boys* at Burghley House, Lincolnshire, though not much later than the *Pair of Elephants*, also at Burghley, all of which were inventoried in 1688. It is notable that these striking figures are not included in several of the great early collections, such as Burghley, Drayton House, the Dresden Collection, and the Residenz collection in Munich, where one would expect to find them.

Trade records tell us little. Such grand and expensive objects must have been private trade goods rather than standard trade wares, and therefore would not have been recorded in the documents of the VOC.

Indeed, very few figures of any sort are itemized in the Dutch documents. The only remaining Japanese trade documents of the period give us the trade numbers for the years 1709 to 1711. Here we get a glimpse of the enormous extent of private trade. The difference between the number of pieces the Japanese say they sold to the Dutch and the number recorded in the VOC records as having been bought from the Japanese is sometimes as great as fourteenfold. This discrepancy can only be accounted for by the perfectly legal private trade allowed by the Company to each servant of the Company. The Japanese lists of 1711 include "13 *onna ningyo*" (figures of women).

At any rate, these figures, with their brilliant enamels and inventively decorated kimonos and *uchikake*, are among the most dramatic of Japanese porcelains.



50 • *Bijin* figure  
Overglaze enamels.  
Arita ware, Kakiemon  
type. Edo period  
(1615–1867), ca. 1700.  
H. 15¼ in. (38.7 cm)





51 • Pair of hexagonal jars with knobbed lids

Red, blue, green, and brown enamels. Arita ware, Kakiemon-related. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 12¼ in. (31.1 cm)

## Kakiemon-Related Porcelain

THERE IS A CONSIDERABLE quantity of porcelain made in Arita that closely resembles Kakiemon but that is revealed by close inspection to differ significantly. There is, for example, a group of fine wares that has in common with Kakiemon many of the same enamel colors, but employs in addition a brown enamel. This seems to be found on only two shapes. One of these, which is among the classic shapes of Japanese porcelain, is that of the six-sided faceted vases universally known as the



Hampton Court vases (No. 51), after the examples that may have belonged to Queen Mary at Hampton Court. These jars and other, similar ones at Windsor Castle may have remained when most of the Queen's collection was given to the Duke of Albemarle in 1696, two years after her death. In the inventory of Kensington Palace taken in 1697 are listed jars of "six squares," which have generally been assumed to be vases of this type. Several variations of decoration appear on such jars, but most have the brown enamel. The deco-

ration is always formal and static, especially on the shoulder, where it is highly stylized. The other shape in Arita porcelain on which the brown enamel occurs is the square jar that derives from the Dutch gin bottle shape. It seems highly unlikely that if the Kakiemon enamelers had this brown enamel they would not have used it elsewhere, especially as so many of their designs include the branches of trees, for which brown would be a likely choice of color. Variations on the Kakiemon palette can be seen in the large jar (No. 52), which

52 • Octagonal jar  
with decoration  
of flowering  
cherry and  
chrysanthemum

Underglaze blue, over-  
glaze enamels, and gold.  
Arita ware, Kakiemon-  
related. Edo period  
(1615–1867), ca. 1700.  
H. 17½ in. (44.5 cm)





can be classified either as Kakiemon-related or as Imari, and in the melon-shaped teapot with square-looped handle (No. 53).

Some Kakiemon-related porcelains show a variation not of color but of decoration. While the range of the Kakiemon style is certainly wide, it is rarely stiff and formal with a heavy black outline, which distinguishes the pattern on the ewer with strap handle (No. 54). The ewer must be closely related to Kakiemon, as the colors are the classic ones, but the differences are great enough for us to speculate whether such jugs were painted in a different workshop.

All kilns made wares of different price ranges and for different geographic markets. Variations in the quality of their production should therefore be expected. Furthermore, it is not usually possible to

attribute with certainty export wares to one kiln; even the *nigoshide* body, so typical of the Kakiemon kiln, has been found at other kiln sites, though admittedly in very small quantities. Whether these Kakiemon-related porcelain wares were made at the Kakiemon kiln therefore remains an open question, though it seems reasonable to assume that they were not in fact produced at the one workshop.

53 · Teapot in the shape of a melon, with square-looped handle and decoration of peonies

Underglaze blue decoration of peonies and later enamels. Arita ware, Kakiemon-related. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. H. 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (17.2 cm)



54 · Ewer with strap handle and decoration of birds and peonies

Polychrome enamels. Arita ware, Kakiemon-related. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1680. H. 8<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (21.6 cm)



55 • Large baluster  
jar with figure of  
hawk on lid

Underglaze blue, over-  
glaze enamels, and gold.  
Arita ware, Ko Imari  
type. Edo period (1615–  
1867), late 17th–early  
18th century. H. 29½ in.  
(74.9 cm)

## Ko Imari

THE EARLY YEARS of the export trade in porcelain can be conveniently divided into two phases: the settling-down period (1659–80), when the kilns and enameling workshops were first having to cope with large demands for unfamiliar objects and the enamels themselves were at a partially experimental stage, and the last two decades of the century and onward, when the fully developed porcelains, known as Ko Imari (Old Imari), evolved. Because of the distinctive quality and beauty of the Kakiemon group, Ko Imari has received less attention in the literature, in spite of the fact that numerically it is by far the greater. Of course there are many subdivisions that can be drawn within this wide category, but for the purposes of this catalogue we propose only to divide the groups that use underglaze blue from those that do not; these will be treated in the next section.

Most Ko Imari porcelains have blue-and-white decoration with spaces left for later painting in enamels in a second firing at a lower temperature. These spaces may be very precise, such as those for flowers to be added to branches (No. 55), or much less exact, where an undecorated area is simply left in the white to be enameled.

A major production of several of the more important export kilns of Arita must have been large jars, much in demand in the great houses of Europe. *Garnitures de cheminée*, sets of three-baluster jars with lids and two trumpet-shaped beaker vases to be placed at the base of the mantelpiece, were produced from about the last decade of the seventeenth century. The range of decorative styles and techniques found on these

pieces is very wide, reflecting different tastes and different price ranges. Frequently, cartouches are divided by bands of enamel and blue-and-white diaper patterns, and formal designs appear on the shoulders and neck and above the foot. In spite of their impressive size, even the largest jars did not always have the finest decoration; this is, of course, quite normal for export wares. Frequently, the knops on the lids are interesting, and are often modeled as animals—elephants, hawks, shishi, or chickens (No. 55)—or as human figures. There is probably a close relationship between these knops and the popular freestanding Ko Imari figures (No. 56). Perhaps the best known of these figures are the carp that strive to leap up the Longmen Falls (No. 57). These may be dated among the later of the figures on account of their pink enamel wash, made of colloidal gold, which seems to have appeared only in the second decade of the eighteenth century. Earlier figures include chickens, some in rigid and stylized poses (No. 58), others more relaxed and even with chicks (No. 56). The more stylized type is nearly identical to figures in *blanc de chine*, though which is the model, which the mimic is difficult to tell.

The double-gourd shape is frequently used in both Chinese and Japanese porcelain, and Ko Imari examples are legion. Rarely, however, is the shape exploited as well as it is in the elongate gourd (No. 59), which is decorated with a trellis of gourd vine, so that the bottle is the fruit of its own decoration. More commonly, Ko Imari wares were made to European order in European shapes, that is, in shapes that were useful in European households or even businesses. Barbers' bowls (No. 60), with the half-circle cut from the rim to accom-





#### 56 • Chicken with chicks

Overglaze blue enamels and iron wash. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th–early 18th century. H. 11 in. (27.9 cm)



#### 57 • Carp

Polychrome and colloidal gold enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. H. 9½ in. (24.1 cm)



# 58 • Chicken

Overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. H. 7 in. (17.8 cm)

# 59 • Sake bottle in the shape of a gourd

Underglaze blue and overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm)





moderate the client's neck while he was being shaved or his arm while he was being bled, are typical, as are the various shapes associated with the drinking of chocolate, coffee, or tea as a part of social life. Many of the urns, in particular those for coffee, follow European silver prototypes, while teapots tend to be based on Chinese or Japanese wine ewers, the handle placed at the side rather than at the top. A specifically Dutch shape is the coffee urn with two handles and three taps (No. 61); the metal taps were added in Holland, in spaces left for the purpose. A shape found in both Dutch silver and Delft faience is that of the gadrooned dish (No. 62). Often the metal shapes were imitated in Holland in faience before they were copied in Japanese porcelain.

Those shapes that do not conform to European usage almost always came to Europe as part of the private trade conducted by servants of the East India Companies, for which a certain amount of shipping space was always allowed. Sometimes

late delivery to the quayside forced the VOC to buy makeweight pieces, a situation the Japanese would exploit to offer inferior goods. Several complaints to this effect appear in reports of the VOC. On occasion, however, this must have resulted in the purchase of unusual pieces, such as the shell-shaped dish with floral decoration (No. 63), to our pleasure today.

The large plate (No. 64), identical to one still in the Dresden Collection that was made as a saucer plate to a covered tureen, bears a Johanneum mark, which testifies to its provenance in that same assemblage made by Augustus the Strong (1670–1733). Such large plates are also known in armorial patterns which, as in plate No. 65, may be purely decorative, inspired by *chine de commande* (Chinese export porcelain). The curiously decorated sander (No. 66), a European implement used for drying ink, is a form made solely for export in the early eighteenth century.

60a · Barber's bowl with decoration by  
Cornelis Pronk

Underglaze blue. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D. 12 in. (30.5 cm)

60b · Barber's bowl with decoration of  
cockereel

Underglaze blue and overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th–early 18th century. D. 10<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (27.3 cm)

60c · Barber's bowl with baroque decorations, after a silver prototype

Underglaze blue, overglaze enamels, and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th–early 18th century. D. 9<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> in. (24.8 cm)

61 · Coffee urn,  
after a silver  
prototype

Underglaze blue with overglaze iron red and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), 1680–1700. H. 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in. (31.8 cm)



62 · Gadrooned  
dish, after a metal  
prototype

Underglaze blue and overglaze red and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. D. 10 in. (25.4 cm)





63 · Dish in the shape of a shell, with floral decoration

Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), 17th century. D. 9 in. (22.9 cm)

64 · Plate with decoration of cranes and pines

Underglaze blue with gold. Johanneum mark  $\begin{smallmatrix} \text{K} & 565 \\ + \end{smallmatrix}$  on base. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. D. 19 in. (48.3 cm)







65 • Armorial plate

Underglaze blue with enamels and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1690. D. 20 in. (50.8 cm)



66 • Sander

Underglaze blue with red enamel and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. 2 × 4 × 2 in. (5.1 × 10.2 × 5.1 cm)

## Imari with No Underglaze Blue

THERE ARE SEVERAL types of Imari wares that are decorated in enamels without the use of underglaze blue, as distinct from the more usual polychrome Imari. Most likely, they were intended to emulate the best Kakiemon, for they are nearly all of unusually good quality, though rarely do they achieve that high standard.

Imari with no underglaze blue can be cat-

egorized by the use of particular enamel palettes. The most richly polychrome has turquoise, aubergine, black, a vibrant though not translucent red, and two varieties of green (No. 67). The enamels on the richly decorated pear-shaped tankard (No. 68) have been applied so as to blend in with one another where they meet, a feature found in better-quality pieces regardless of whether there is underglaze blue. Yellow is not always used, and, curiously, neither is overglaze blue, as in the standing saltcellar (No. 69). Other distinct palettes are gold and



67 • Lobed teapot  
Polychrome enamels.  
European replacements  
of spout and handle.  
Arita ware, Ko Imari  
type. Edo period (1615–  
1867), late 17th century.  
H. 4½ in. (11.4 cm)

68 · Tankard in the shape of a pear, with floral decoration, modeled in low relief

Polychrome enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 6 in. (15.2 cm)



69 · Saltcellar

Polychrome enamels and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1680. H. 2½ in. (6.4 cm)



70 · Kendi

Red and colloidal gold enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. H. 8 in. (20.3 cm)



71 · Plate with decoration of birds in millet

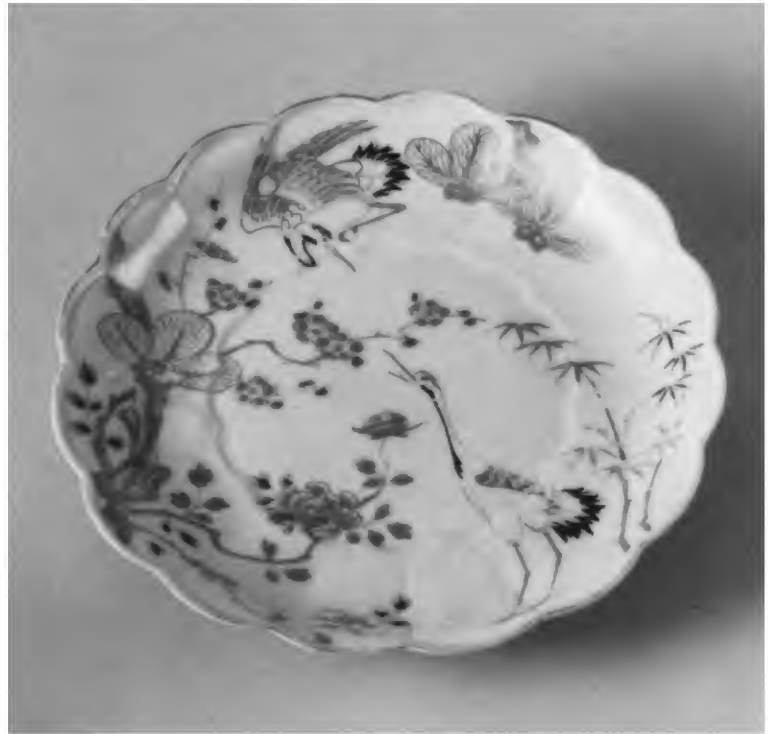
Red and colloidal gold enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. D. 16 3/4 in. (42.6 cm)

black; red and gold (Nos. 70, 71); and black, red, green, and gold. This last occurs on pieces that can be dated stylistically to the second or third decade of the eighteenth century, on the basis of pieces that were copied at the porcelain factory at Worcester, such as the dish with lobed rim (No. 72).

The rare Japanese armorial plate (No. 73), with arms formerly but incorrectly identified as those of the Portuguese House of Brandao, is related to the red-and-gold palette.

A further palette appears to be found only on vases of a hybrid form that seem to combine elements of the sleeve vase and the *rolwagen* (No. 74). This shape, with virtually identical decoration in markedly similar enamels, also occurs in Chinese porcelain, which suggests that porcelains were ordered from both China and Japan at the same time, a practice that was to become more common in the second quarter of the eighteenth century.

Not all the shapes imported were of immediately obvious use in a European context. Wall vases of various types are not uncommon among Imari porcelains, and they must have been used more than we would have expected. The folded-fan shape is particularly suited to this purpose (No. 75); other shapes include gourds, melons, animals, birds, and figures such as Hotei. In the Dresden Collection, there are even wall vases of Kyoto earthenware that were almost certainly in the collection in 1719; these are in the shape of butterflies. The Dresden Collection also has Imari pieces with no underglaze blue in the form of wisteria flowers.



72 · Lobed dish with molded design of chrysanthemums, and with decoration of crane, bamboo, plum, and pine

Black, green, red, and gold enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D. 8 in. (20.3 cm)



73 · Armorial plate

Overglaze enamels and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D. 9 in. (22.9 cm)





74 · Cylindrical vase

Polychrome enamels. Arita ware, Ko Imari type. Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 11½ in. (29.2 cm)

75 · Pair of fan-shaped hanging wall vases  
Overglaze enamels and gold. Arita ware, Ko Imari type.  
Edo period (1615–1867), late 17th century. H. 8¼ in.  
(21 cm)



76 • Sake bottle with decoration of bamboo, plum, rock, birds, and peonies

Polychrome enamels. Arita ware, Imari type (formerly called Ko Kutani). Edo period (1615–1867), 1660–80.  
H. 11½ in. (29.2 cm)



## Arita, Kutani, and the Kutani Style

TRADITIONALLY, many different types of ceramic wares, covering a wide range of dates and origins, have been classified as Kutani, and there is continuing controversy over what distinguishes Kutani from Ko Kutani (Old Kutani). Many of the so-called Ko Kutani wares are demonstrably of seventeenth-century Arita manufacture, some are later, and others clearly date from the seventeenth century but do not appear to be of Arita make. But as far as we know, porcelain was made in Japan in the seventeenth century only in and near Arita and at Kutani.

Excavations at the Kutani kiln sites reveal that very few of the many styles that have in the past been classified as Ko Kutani could actually have been made there. We know from finds of dated test pieces that by the Meireki period (1655–1658) kilns were producing celadon, *temmoku*, and blue-and-white wares at the place now known as Kutani. The decoration of blue-and-white shards from the sites shows no affinity to the decoration of any other porcelain save that of later Kyoto. A large number of shards of white dishes were found, but these lacked the underglaze blue circumferential rings around the foot so characteristic of most “Ko Kutani” large dishes. Nor was the paste of the body similar to that of known pieces.

Shards of white dishes with typical “Kutani” type underglaze-blue backs have been found at the Yambeta No. 3 kiln site in Arita. Similarly, shards from the Maruo kiln site in Arita suggest that green Kutani may have been made there in the mid- to



77 • Plate with  
landscape  
decoration

Overglaze enamels.  
Arita ware, Ko Kutani  
style. Edo period (1615–  
1867), ca. 1670. D. 8 in.  
(20.3 cm).



late seventeenth century. Because celadon dishes for export to Southeast Asia were being made at Maruo in imitation of those from Zhejiang, it may be that the aberrant palette and curious disposition of the enamels are due not to the origin of the wares so much as to their destination. In other words, they may differ from other Arita wares because they were intended for other markets.

Because the body unquestionably dates to the seventeenth century and is almost certainly of Arita manufacture, it is to such pieces as bottle No. 76 that we look for confirmation that the “Kutani” palettes derive more from market demand than from place of manufacture. Another piece in the Ko Kutani style that suggests a seventeenth-century dating is the small plate with landscape in the central field surrounded by a patterned rim in brilliant blue, green, and yellow enamels (No. 77).

Lozenge-shaped dishes made on a press mold, such as the dish enameled with an unusual decoration of chrysanthemum and flying squirrel (No. 78), have in the past often been called Kutani because of the palette of the enamels. There is no reason to suppose this attribution correct, as similar enameled dishes and examples in blue and white have been found at several Arita kiln sites. In these so-called Kutani pieces, the enameler often ignored the molded pattern, as in the set of dishes on which a naturalistic decoration of insects and peonies is applied over a stylized molded design of confronting peacocks (No. 79a–e). Another variant of Arita enameling traditionally associated with Ko Kutani is seen in the dish with a pert bird on bamboo in yellow, green, and aubergine surrounded by a red enameled diaper pattern (No. 80).

If most pieces of so-called Ko Kutani were made in Arita, how did the nineteenth-cen-



tury revival of the Ko Kutani style in Kaga, usually called the Yoshidaya revival, come about? And what was the "Yoshidaya" kiln in fact reviving? Were the characteristic dark palette of enamels and the bold, rough style associated with Kutani in the early nineteenth century?

The handsome *tazza*, or high-footed dish (No. 81a), is a characteristic product of the Yoshidaya revival. The body is dense and very heavy; the making is crude and bold. The design is strongly drawn in the well and somewhat cursory on the back. If there is a

glaze under the coarse dark enamels, it is very thin, and concealed by the overall decoration. The design of scattered fans that boldly defies the confines of the round plate (No. 81b) is characteristic of these celebrated, if problematic, wares. The overall pine-needle patterning in plate No. 82 is a less common variant of this type of enameled decoration. The site of the Yoshidaya kiln, however, remains unknown, so it is purely speculative to identify anything as Yoshidaya.

In looking for the origin of the story of



78 · Lozenge-shaped dish with decoration of chrysanthemum and flying squirrel

Overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Imari type (formerly called Ko Kutani). Edo period (1615–1867). L. 6½ in. (16.5 cm)



79a–e . Set of five lozenge-shaped dishes with molded design of confronting peacocks

Overglaze enamels. Arita ware, Imari type (formerly called Ko Kutani). Edo period (1615–1867). L. 6½ in. (16.5 cm)



80 . Dish with decoration of bird on a bamboo branch

Overglaze enamels. Origin unknown, Ko Kutani type. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. D. 8½ in. (21.6 cm)

81a · *Tazza* with decoration of leaves

Polychrome enamels. Fuku mark on reverse. Kutani ware, Yoshidaya revival. Edo period (1615–1867), early 19th century. D. 10 in. (25.4 cm)

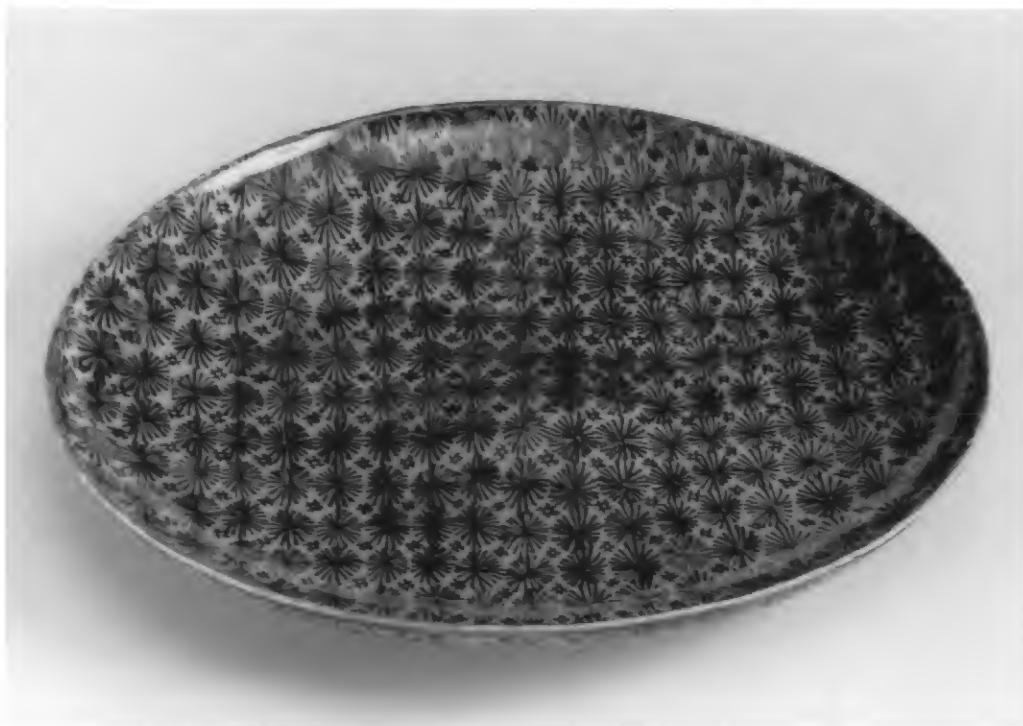
81b · Plate with decoration of fans

Green, yellow, black, and brown enamels. Arita ware, Ko Kutani type. Edo period (1615–1867), 19th century. D. 8½ in. (21.6 cm)



82 · Plate with  
overall decoration  
of pine needles

Green enamel on  
obverse, blue enamel on  
reverse. Arita ware, Ko  
Kutani type. Edo period  
(1615–1867), 19th cen-  
tury. D. 10½ in.  
(26.7 cm)



this revival kiln, we are led back to Augustus Franks's catalogue of the Japanese porcelain exhibited at the South Kensington Museum (later the Victoria and Albert Museum) in 1878. Franks, one of the most brilliant of connoisseurs, was here relying not on his own knowledge and experience but on information given to him by Japanese dealers and collectors.

Captain Frank Brinkley, a British military officer in Yokohama from 1867 who collected Japanese ceramics, writing in 1885, summarizes the later history of Kutani thus: "There was, first of all, the ware of Honda Teikichi and his successors, produced at Wakasugi, in the Nomi district; there was, secondly, the Ko Kutani ware, produced from 1790 till 1865 at the Kutani factory, and from 1843 till 1865 at Waka-

sugi, and there was finally the gold-and-red ware of the Hachirōemon kiln, dating from 1840." Brinkley also quotes from a contemporary census that by 1885 there were "upward of 2,700 persons engaged, either technically or commercially, in the industry in Kaga province." The site of the Wakasugi kiln is not known, nor is the name Yoshidaya mentioned by Brinkley.\*

Clearly, the situation in the Kaga ceramics industry was, in the early nineteenth century, very much more complex than has usually been assumed. We have, therefore, been cautious in the attribution of the porcelains in this section.

\*Captain Frank Brinkley, *Japan: Its History, Arts, and Literature* (Boston–Tokyo: Millet, 1901), vol. 8, *Keramic Art*, pp. 250–51.



## Kakiemon Blue and White

THE KAKIEMON style of decoration is found on much Arita porcelain that is decorated only in underglaze blue, though it frequently has a brown edge. Much of this porcelain was, as kiln finds show, indeed made at the Kakiemon kiln, and was made in considerable quantities. But it was also made at other kilns, perhaps in an attempt to join in the obvious success of that kiln. The style that we recognize under this name is one of careful and relatively sparse painting, usually of landscape or of flowers and birds (Nos. 83, 84). Some of the standard patterns of the colored Kakiemon plates appear in blue and white: the Leaping Tiger, the Banded Hedge, and the Shishi, among others.

The Kakiemon kiln also made other distinctive blue-and-white wares, often featuring patterns within patterns (No. 85), with areas of blue wash that is sometimes overlaid with another blue, or scratched away to form scrollwork (No. 86). These, too, were imitated elsewhere, but never in the same quantity as at Kakiemon.

More ordinary types of blue and white were also made at Kakiemon, usually of good quality: the small Wanli-*kraak*-style dishes, for example, are often from the Kakiemon kiln. All Kakiemon blue and white has the Arita bluish body and glaze.

The Gerry Collection includes a Chinese copy of a Kakiemon blue-and-white plate that bears armorials within the foot on the reverse (No. 87). The model is the Kakiemon pattern Tiger and Bamboo, an example of which is in the Dresden Collection, acquired in 1723. The plate is part of a service ordered at (or possibly after) the time of the wedding of Horace Walpole, later 4th Earl of Orford, and Lady Rachel Cavendish, daughter of William, 3rd Duke of Devonshire, in 1748; the arms are those of Walpole impaling Cavendish.

Japanese services with armorials are rare. (Two Ko Imari examples produced at Arita are Nos. 65 and 73.) In China, the practice of making services to order was common during and after the Yongzheng period, and frequently these would bear armorials, crests, or monograms.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the Chinese had successfully ousted Japan from the European porcelain market. The Chinese had been producing great quantities of porcelain in direct competition with Imari—the so-called Chinese Imari. This was usually, but not always, for a market at the lower end of a price scale that greatly valued Japanese porcelain; and while much Chinese Imari is of poor quality and colored only in underglaze blue and overglaze red and gold, some is of much higher quality. Only rarely was Kakiemon porcelain copied in China, as in this plate.

83 . Square-lobed dish with decoration of old pine trees

Underglaze blue with brown-glazed rim. Fuku mark on reverse. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. w.  $8\frac{3}{4}$  in. (22.2 cm)



84 . Plate with decoration of geese and waves

Underglaze blue. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), mid-18th century. D.  $7\frac{3}{8}$  in. (18.7 cm)



85 · Dish with decoration of large arum leaves with five paulownia crests on fluted rim  
Underglaze blue, with gold, silver, and red enamels on crests. Fuku mark on reverse. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. D. 8 in. (20.3 cm)



86 · Plate with poppy decoration  
Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), mid-18th century. D. 8 5/8 in. (22 cm)

87 · Plate with molded rim and decoration  
of Kakiemon-style tiger and bamboo  
Underglaze blue. Coat of arms of Horace Walpole on  
reverse. Qing dynasty (1644–1912), 1755. D. 13¾ in.  
(34.9 cm)





## Nabeshima

UNTIL THE END of the seventeenth century, Japanese porcelain was made in shapes that were of European derivation, and decorated to suit European tastes. It therefore met little demand in Japan. When the Nabeshima daimyo, the rulers of Hizen Province where Arita was situated, wanted to patronize a kiln that would make porcelain exclusively for their use, they turned to Ōkawachi, a kiln about five miles north of Arita. Shards suggest that previously there had been a kiln at this site, and that during the period of production of Nabeshima porcelain, the Ōkawachi kiln continued to make other wares. Ōkawachi seems to have been a large kiln, and it is probable that only two of the central kiln chambers, those with the most even temperature distribution, were used for the official wares.

These wares are of particularly high quality. Curiously, the white body and glaze of the Kakiemon were never emulated at Ōkawachi, where the bluish tinge inherent in other Arita porcelain was preferred.

The decoration on these official wares is quite different from that of Arita, which was made for the export market—not only in taste but also in the way the design was made. The outlines of areas to be enameled are drawn in underglaze blue (No. 88a,b), in a manner akin to Chinese *doucai*, a practice never used at Arita. The decoration is thus always very carefully drawn, and the use of

resist techniques and stencils can be detected (No. 89a–c). Many pieces are in blue and white only (Nos. 90, 91), some are in blue and white with colored enamels, while others feature the glaze colors celadon and a deep brown, skillfully used in conjunction with underglaze blue. The decoration itself may be abstract or floral, representational or formalized. Frequently, the typical Edo-period device of the overlaying of a fine pattern with a bold pattern is used to great effect (No. 89a).

Most Nabeshima porcelain is in the shape of dishes or cups. Dishes are mostly of three sizes—about ten, twenty, or thirty centimeters in diameter—though others do occur. Characteristically, they are on a high foot, though the larger ones are sometimes on three modeled feet. Occasionally, the rim is slightly flattened at the edge (No. 91), but the most usual shape of the inside of a dish is an almost perfect catenary curve. Those dishes that are flatter in profile tend to have more decoration on the back (always in underglaze blue) than those with the usual three-part cash or floral pattern. The tall foot is nearly always painted with a comb pattern.

Cups tend to be conical, sometimes with a stepped foot (No. 88a). Much rarer are the tall cups, often of an elaborate shape in cross-section (No. 90), which seem to represent a sophisticated stylistic extension of early-seventeenth-century *mukōzuke* cups of Mino.

There has been much debate over the dat-

88a • *Mukōzuke*  
with decoration of  
formal foliate scroll  
Underglaze blue and  
overglaze enamels.  
Nabeshima ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867), 18th  
century. H. 2¾ in. (7 cm)

88b • *Mukōzuke*  
with decoration of  
cherry blossom and  
brushwood fence  
Underglaze blue and  
overglaze enamels.  
Nabeshima ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867), early  
18th century. H. 3 in.  
(7.6 cm)





89a · Dish with decoration of three jars  
Underglaze blue and enamels. Nabeshima ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867), ca. 1700. D. 6 in. (15.2 cm)

89b · Dish with decoration of maple tree  
Underglaze blue and overglaze enamels. Nabeshima  
ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 1688–1704. D. 8 in.  
(20.3 cm)

89c · Dish with decoration of maple leaves  
and spider web

Paste resist against underglaze blue and overglaze  
enamels. Nabeshima ware. Edo period (1615–1867),  
18th century. D. 5¾ in. (14.6 cm)

ing of Nabeshima porcelain. It seems likely that the finest and most beautiful pieces date from the early eighteenth century, and that the Nabeshima style continued in use throughout the eighteenth and into the nineteenth century. Indeed, the style continues today, at Arita, in the hands of the thirteenth-generation Imaizumi Imaemon.

Imitations of Nabeshima, even extending to the use of the comb-pattern foot, were made at the Hirado kilns in the nineteenth century.



90 · Polyhedral-shaped *mukōzuke* with decoration of knotted cord

Underglaze blue. Nabeshima ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 1688–1704. H. 2½ in. (6.4 cm)



91 · Plate with decoration of camellia branch

Underglaze blue. Nabeshima ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D. 8 in. (20.3 cm)

## The Shibuemon Style

A CORPUS OF ENAMELED wares has been associated with a certain Shibuemon, said to have been the uncle of Kakiemon VI (d. 1735). Although a Shibuemon style is recognized, its authenticity as the seventeenth-century oeuvre of this master is questionable.

Pieces attributed to Shibuemon tend to be very carefully painted, in a style that mixes extreme formality with graceful realism. The shapes tend to be sharp and angular. While the style owes something to the Kakiemon, as can be seen in the design

of persimmon branch in the center of the octagonal bowl (No. 92), the use of the *doucai* technique—the outlining of pictorial elements in underglaze blue—suggests closer affinities to Nabeshima. Indeed, the style is sometimes referred to as Kaki-Nabe.

In general, these pieces are ascribed to the late seventeenth century, based on possibly spurious documentary evidence. If, however, we look at the internal evidence of structure, shape, and style, it is difficult to see this hybrid style as seventeenth century, and a more probable date would be mid- to late eighteenth century.



92 • Octagonal bowl, attributed to Shibuemon

Underglaze blue and overglaze enamels. Edo period (1615–1867), 18th century. D.  $6\frac{3}{4}$  in. (17.2 cm)



## Arita Blue and White After European Designs

THE USE OF EUROPEAN prints and engravings as models for patterns on Japanese porcelain seems to have been initiated in the early eighteenth century. The prototype for the most common of these designs is unknown. Although usually referred to as the Deshima Island pattern (Nos. 93, 94), the scene is certainly Dutch, as there are cows and towers, as well as hills, whereas Deshima Island was a fan-shaped reclaimed mud flat in Nagasaki harbor. The drawing of clouds on these and other shapes (No. 95a,b) has been compared to the work of the seventeenth-century Dutch painter Frederik van Frytom. This particular scene occurs, with variations, well into the nineteenth century. It also appears on Chinese wares.

The prototypes for some of the best designs based on prints are found in a book by Olfert Dapper published in Amsterdam in 1670. Adaptations of a few of these appear on Arita blue-and-white teapots (No. 96), transforming an already somewhat fanciful scene into Japanese chinoiserie.

Some of these designs were commissioned from Dutch artists for the purpose of being used on porcelain. On March 12, 1734, the Chamber of Seventeen (the governors of the Dutch East India Company in Amsterdam) requested that the Chamber of Delft "have some models made in order for the same to be sent to Batavia and from there to China to serve as samples after which the porcelain objects required by the Company ought and should be made." On August 31 of the same year, "some drawings which could be sent in the manner



aforesaid, done by one Cornelis Pronk" were shown to the Chamber of Seventeen. The Chamber approved them, and drew up a contract for more drawings from Pronk, specifying that they should detail not only the patterns, but also the shapes and sizes of the porcelain.\*

Pronk worked for the Company for three and a half years. Several patterns after his designs are known in Chinese porcelain; only one is known in Japanese porcelain. By far the most frequently found, and the sole pattern to have been made in both China and Japan, is the Lady with the Parasol (No. 97a-c). An original drawing for a dish using this pattern is in the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam. The Lady with the Parasol was probably the first pattern to be supplied. It was drawn in 1734, received in Batavia in 1735, and sent on to China in 1736 and to Japan a little later the same year.

To our knowledge, the pattern was used in Japan only on plates. Some are enameled (No. 97a); others, more rare, are underglaze

93 · Plate with Dutch landscape (Deshima Island pattern), after Chinese export prototype

Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. D. 8 in. (20.3 cm)

\* J. A. Christiaan Jörg, *Porcelain after Designs by Cornelis Pronk* (Groningen–The Hague, 1980), Appendix 1, pp. 10, 49.

94 · Plate with Dutch landscape (Deshima Island pattern)

Underglaze blue. Arita ware, Kakiemon type. Edo period (1615–1867), early 18th century. D. 7¼ in. (18.4 cm.)





95a,b • Pair of cups  
in the style of  
von Frytom

Underglaze blue. Arita  
ware. Edo period (1615–  
1867), early 18th cen-  
tury. D. 3 in. (7.6 cm)



96 • Teapot with  
landscape after  
Olfert Dapper

Underglaze blue. Arita  
ware. Edo period (1615–  
1867), early 18th cen-  
tury. H. 6¼ in. (15.9 cm)





97a-c · Plates with decoration of Ladies with a Parasol, attributed to Cornelis Pronk

a. Underglaze blue, overglaze enamels. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), 1734–37. D. 10½ in. (26.7 cm).  
 b. Overglaze enamels. Qing dynasty (1644–1912), 18th century. D. 9⅜ in. (23.9 cm). c. Underglaze blue. Arita ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1736. D. 10½ in. (26.7 cm)





98 · Dish with decoration of balloon ascension, signed "Shiba Kokan" and inscribed *Luft schip*

Underglaze blue and overglaze red enamel.  
*Ano* 1797 on reverse.  
 Arita ware. Edo period  
 (1615–1867), 1797.  
 D. 6 in. (15.2 cm)

blue (No. 97c). In China, the patterns appeared on several different shapes, including coffeepots, butter dishes, jugs, teapots, and plates of many sizes.

No exact prototype is known for the design of the ballooning scene on the plate "signed" by Shiba Kōkan (No. 98). Perhaps it is from a pastiche by Kōkan (1747–1818), who, as the first Japanese artist to attempt the engraving process, was familiar with Western engravings.

The first manned balloon ascent was made in Paris in November 1783 in a hot-air balloon designed by Joseph and Étienne Montgolfier. In December of that year, the physicist J. A. C. Charles, accompanied by Nicolas-Louis Robert, flew a hydrogen-filled balloon. Early balloons after this date tended to have a gondola-shaped boat for the aviators, and many had oars with which it was hoped the balloon could be raised, lowered, and steered. The design on the

plate is absurd; the gondola is far too big in proportion to the balloon, and the enameler has not included such essentials as oars. The date on the back of the plate, 1797, could as well represent the date of the origin of the design as the date of the plate. The inscription is probably intended to be the Dutch *Luft Schip* (airship).

## Hirado, and the Early-Nineteenth-Century Factories

IN THE BOOM PERIOD for porcelain, at the end of the eighteenth century, several new kiln areas arose, which resulted in a wide variety of wares being made available to the domestic market. Among these were Hasami and Kihara, near Arita, both of which had had an earlier phase of production; kilns on Kyushu such as Hirado, which seems to have begun in the 1770s,

and Kameyama, which may have begun in 1803; kilns such as Tobe and Iyo on Shikoku; the great industry at Seto; kilns on Honshu, such as Himeji; and the smaller kilns of Kyoto. There was also a revival at Kutani.

Arita too was in a period of revival at this time. But the best porcelains were those of the Hirado kilns at Mikawachi, where a particularly fine white clay of great plasticity allowed for superb modeling in high relief and cut piercing that became the specialty of the kilns. In the early phase, blue-



99 • Octagonal sake bottle with landscape

Underglaze blue. Hirado ware. Edo period (1615–1867), late 18th century. H. 6 in. (15.2 cm)

100 · Hexagonal wine server with twisted  
handle and wooden lid

Underglaze blue. Hirado ware. Edo period (1615–1867),  
early 19th century. H. 7 in. (17.8 cm)



and-white painting was used as the main decoration, while iron brown came into use somewhat later.

The Mikawachi kilns, a few miles west of Arita, seem to have begun production in the second half of the eighteenth century. Toward the end of the century, a fine-bodied, clear-glazed ware was in production, much of it with finely painted underglaze blue. The octagonal sake bottle (No. 99), with its Chinese-style landscape beautifully conforming to the faceted shape, is among the best of the wares made at Mikawachi. The kilns later earned a reputation for intricate modeling and cutting of clay. Although this early bottle is relatively crude in its modeling, it is among the most beautiful of Hirado wares.

A hint of the clay technology that was to be exploited so well at Hirado is evident in the twisted handle of the wine server (No. 100). The underglaze blue is characteristically faint and, typically for this relatively early period, well painted. The spout is shaped in a squared form, well known in Chinese porcelain, that may derive ultimately from Islamic metalwork.

Later Hirado pieces, produced in the mid-nineteenth century, represent the second flowering of wares made for the European market. The Hirado factories scored a considerable success at the great nineteenth-century industrial fairs, such as the one held in Chicago in 1893. Several American museums, notably the Walters Art Gallery in Baltimore, have fine collections, bought hot, as it were, from the kiln. The fine Hirado collection at the Metropolitan Museum was acquired directly from Brinkley in Yokohama.

Ceramic sculpture, which became a major product of the Hirado kilns in the early nineteenth century, first included ani-

mals of the zodiac, conch shells, and shishi, among other forms. By the middle of the nineteenth century, Hirado models of animals had become somewhat sentimentalized, in line with current European taste, such as the engaging pair of puppies (No. 101a,b). After the 1870s, many Hirado models were copied at the newly mechanized factories in Arita. It is therefore difficult to know the specific place of manufacture of the finely modeled hawk poised on a gnarled stump of richly mottled brown and green (No. 102). Clearly this figure was inspired by European models, though it was not necessarily made for export.

Despite the focus on export in the ceramic production at Hirado, its finest wares were those made for Japanese use. The water dropper and brush rest (No. 103a,b), exquisitely modeled forms of chrysanthemum and narcissus, are Japanese writing implements similar to those now in the Rijksmuseum voor Volkenkunde in Leiden. They were brought to Leiden in 1827 as a marvel of Japan's industry by Philipp Franz von Siebold, who had been a physician to the Dutch traders at Deshima.

#### 101a • Sleeping puppy

Molded form with incised details. Hirado ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1850. H.  $\frac{7}{8}$  in. (2.3 cm)

#### 101b • Puppy

Molded form with incised details. Hirado ware. Edo period (1615–1867), ca. 1850. H. 4 in. (10.2 cm)







102 · Hawk on tree  
stump

Molded form with over-  
glaze enamels. Possibly  
Hirado ware. Edo period  
(1615–1867), 19th cen-  
tury. H. 12½ in. (31.8 cm)



103a · Water dropper in the shape of a  
chrysanthemum

Molded form with blue enamel. Hirado ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867), ca. 1820. L. 2½ in. (6.4 cm)

103b · Brush holder in the shape of a  
narcissus spray

Molded form with blue enamel. Hirado ware. Edo  
period (1615–1867), ca. 1820. L. 5½ in. (14 cm)



# Appendix A: The Early Appreciation of Japanese Art in Europe

OLIVER R. IMPEY

THE FIRST EUROPEANS to arrive in Japan were the Portuguese, in 1542. Trade began immediately between Japan and Europe, and although severely restricted from the early seventeenth century until the middle of the nineteenth century, it has continued ever since.

The Portuguese took part in the intra-Asian trade cycle, buying goods in one Asian country in order to sell them in another, and making a profit on each transaction before dispatching the ships back to Europe. Thus, cotton goods were bought in India and sold in Southeast Asia; India wanted gold. Silk was bought in China and sold in Japan and elsewhere; China wanted silver. Spices were bought in the Moluccas and in South India and sold almost everywhere. Other goods commonly traded were metals, exotic woods, gunpowder, and a host of other materials. The demand in Europe was mostly for gold and spices. The Portuguese bought silver in Japan; when that was forbidden, they bought copper.

We are concerned here with the acquisition in Europe of Japanese artifacts. Initially, Japanese lacquer made for the Portuguese (and later for the Dutch) was of prime importance. Europeans were not overly concerned about the origin of exotic Oriental goods once they had reached Europe. Most things they described as "Indian" or as "China woork." Thus, in the famous inventory drawn up in 1590 of the household goods and pictures belonging to Lord Lumley, there appears a listing for "Two large Tables [i.e., pictures] of China woork." We have no further clue as to what they might have been, although China has given its name to porcelain, in the same sense that japanning takes its name from its country of inspiration. Most likely it was not porcelain, although porcelain from China was by now appearing in the great houses of England. In the Lumley context, "China woork" implied something exotic and probably something Oriental.

The earliest identifiable Japanese object still in a European collection is a Namban-style lacquer and pearl-shell chest of drawers in Ambras Castle, in Austria, which was inventoried in the collection of Archduke Ferdinand II of the Tyrol in 1596. Japanese porcelain did not reach Europe until 1658.

In 1600, the Dutch arrived in Japan and set up a trading station. They were followed by the English in 1611. However, the English withdrew in 1623 and the Portuguese were expelled in 1639, leaving the Dutch and the Chinese to share a monopoly of the Japanese trade. This trade was always rigidly controlled by the Japanese authorities. Despite the official closure of the country edicts,



provision was made for limited trade, for the Japanese relied on imports of silk, spice, wood, gunpowder, and other commodities. Indeed, both the Japanese shogun and individual daimyo often invested money in Chinese and Dutch ships.

The Dutch continued to develop the trade in lacquer, as did the Chinese. They entered the porcelain market in the second half of the seventeenth century, and continued throughout the first forty-odd years of the eighteenth. The Dutch shipped goods to Holland, where they were sold at auction, sometimes to foreign buyers. But the Chinese shipped Japanese goods to Amoy, to Tonkin, and later to Canton and other ports in South China, where they could be bought by merchants of the European East India Companies that could not visit Japan—the English, the French, the Prussians, and the Swedes. It is therefore possible to explain the very evident differences between the early Dutch collections (or, rather, at this date, accumulations) of Japanese porcelain and the early English collections. For example, little Kakiemon and Kakiemon-style porcelain went to Holland, though much went to England, France, and the German states. This was perhaps more the result of selective buying by the Chinese than of choices made by the merchants of the European East India Companies. In other words, it is not unlikely that Kakiemon and related porcelains eventually turned up in European collections because they were more to the Chinese taste than were Imari porcelains. Of course, the price factor must also be taken into consideration, for the Chinese shipped quantities of low-quality porcelain for the cheaper markets. It is notable that the higher quality Kenjō Imari wares are more to be found in German than in other European collections. This is perhaps more difficult to explain, though it could be the result of bulk buying of a fashionable and expensive ware over a short period.

By the mid-seventeenth century, when Japanese porcelain first arrived in Europe, other Japanese goods were already well known. Japanese lacquer, especially the cabinets and coffer still to be seen in the great houses of Europe, were almost commonplace—though they were still expensive. Screens, first seen in 1588, when the first Japanese envoys went to Europe, were by 1613 common enough for the East India Company in London to be somewhat scornful of those brought back from Japan by Captain John Saris in the Company's ship *Clove* the following year. Paper from Japan, a great luxury prized for its quality, was used by Rembrandt. Japanese norimon (sedan chairs) were used in Goa; a model of one of these was in Copenhagen in 1623. Two suits of armor sent by Tokugawa Ieyasu to King James I in 1613 are still in the Tower of London.

Japanese porcelain, when it arrived, was admired primarily for its brilliant colors. Most Chinese porcelains of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644) that had been brought to Europe had been blue and white or celadon, though some colored wares had slipped through; there are, for instance, examples of the highly prized gilded red-and-green *kinrande* wares at Ambras Castle. Celadons had been marketed mainly in the Near East (one exception is the Yuan celadon bowl mounted in silver gilt given by Archbishop Warham to New College, Oxford, in 1532). But the bright, translucent colors of the Japanese porcelains must have created something of a sensation. When the Jingdezhen kilns recovered from the effects of the civil wars, in the 1670s, the *famille verte*

enameled wares, followed by the *famille rose*, must have been made in direct competition for the upper end of the European market, just as Chinese Imari was, after about 1720, for the lower end of the market. By about 1740, Jingdezhen had successfully ousted the Japanese from the European porcelain market, and exports of Japanese porcelain to Europe virtually ceased. The period of the Japanese export trade of porcelain to Europe, then, covers only the eighty-odd years from 1660 to about 1740.

It is not yet clear how porcelain was distributed in the early years of the Japanese trade once it reached Europe. We do know, however, that in England the East India Company held auctions at their offices in Leadenhall Street. Company records from the end of the century provide detailed information about how these auctions were arranged at the end of the century, when dealers, usually called "India merchants" or "China-men," bought large lots for resale.

Porcelain was fashionable, and Japanese porcelain seems to have been at a premium; it was very expensive. By the third quarter of the seventeenth century, porcelain was no longer a rarity to be treasured in the cabinet of curiosities, expensively mounted in silver gilt. It was more for use or decoration, though it was sometimes still mounted in silver. That it was highly prized is evident from its visible presence in grand houses and its occurrence in still-life painting. Every great house in Europe had garnitures of Imari vases; many had figures prominently displayed on shelves or mantelpieces. The 1688 inventory of Burghley House lists, under "China over Ye Chimney [in] My Lord's Dressing Roome":

2 Doggs, 2 Lyons, 2 Staggs, 2 blue and wt Birds  
1 heathen Godd with many Armes  
2 figures with Juggs att their backs.

This was not collecting—this was the furnishing of a great house with ornament suitable to the station of the owner, in this case the Earl of Exeter.

When Queen Mary came to the throne of England in 1689, after eleven years in Holland, she brought with her the fashion not only of the collecting of porcelain, but also that of the massed display of porcelain in rooms furnished and adapted for this purpose, often in conjunction with expensive mirror glass. Two of the finest of these baroque extravaganzas were in castles in Berlin, the Charlottenburg, where the porcelain room survives in reconstruction, and the Oranienburg. Both of these are known to us through contemporary engravings. Serried ranks of porcelain, much of it in sets of similar pieces, were piled on pyramids, lined on cornices, placed on and suspended under shelves, stood on brackets, or fixed to the walls and even to the pillars. Although Queen Mary had a large collection (there were at her death in 1694 some 787 pieces of porcelain in Kensington Palace alone), the designs for Hampton Court drawn for her by Christopher Wren are notably restrained. Smaller houses often had miniature versions of a porcelain room; a particularly charming small room survives at Pommersfelden. At a much lower economic level, the paintings of Pieter de Hooch and Emmanuel de Witte show us the use of ceramics for decoration in domestic interiors of comfort and charm rather than of grandeur.

Because in Europe porcelain was expensive, it was imitated. In the seventeenth century, the only technique known for approximating porcelain was

tin-glazed earthenware, or Delftware, as it was usually called. Sometimes overglaze colors were added, either by low-temperature or high-temperature firing. When the secrets of porcelain, first soft-paste and then in the early eighteenth century true hard-paste porcelain, were discovered in Europe, naturally it was Oriental wares that were copied.

The first hard-paste porcelain was made at Meissen for Augustus the Strong, Elector of Saxony and King of Poland, by Johann Friedrich Böttger and Walther von Tschirnhausen. Böttger had been a jasper cutter, and his first wares were brown stonewares similar to those of Chinese Yixing. When he succeeded in making white-glazed porcelain, he found he had an effect very like that of Kakiemon *nigoshide*. As his underglaze blue was not yet refined, it was logical as well as fashionable for the first Meissen enameled porcelain to imitate Kakiemon.

So successful were these Meissen copies that they are often hard to distinguish from the Japanese ware. Indeed, they may have contributed to the decline of Japanese exports after about 1730, and were probably the models from which the English porcelain factories took some of their patterns in the 1750s.

Japanese porcelain was imported into Europe throughout the eighteenth century, but after about 1730, the quantity was greatly reduced and the trade was erratic and uncertain. Japanese porcelains, however, retained their popularity, and were considered as virtual antiques. Collecting of pieces that had been in Europe for some time (as opposed to pieces straight off the ship) began, and inventories from the second half of the eighteenth century mention "fine old Japan." Usually, but not always, "Japan" had previously meant lacquer, but by this time connoisseurs could distinguish between Chinese and Japanese porcelains.

In France, Japanese and Chinese porcelains sometimes received elaborate ormolu mounts, often completely changing their appearance and function. This was much less common in England, where porcelain began to be kept in China cases specially designed for the purpose by cabinetmakers such as Thomas Chippendale, or William Vile and John Cobb. Fanatical collecting was not uncommon: Margaret, 2nd Duchess of Portland, amassed enormous collections, which included much Japanese porcelain. The collections were dispersed after her death in 1786 in a series of sales that lasted thirty-nine days.

Much of the production of porcelain in Japan was concentrated in the area of Arita, and of this production most was made for export. It was therefore made primarily in styles that reflected the taste of the customer almost as much as the taste of the producer, and can thus barely be classified as truly Japanese. Of the porcelain wares of Japan of the seventeenth and first half of the eighteenth century, only the Nabeshima wares can be regarded as quintessentially Japanese, though some of the early domestic market wares are arguably so.

The larger part of this production was therefore intended for markets outside Japan. At its destination, this porcelain exerted a profound influence, not only on the interior decoration of European houses, but also on the domestic ceramic wares used in those houses, an influence that can be recognized even today in the ceramic productions of Europe.

# Appendix B: Japanese Porcelains in Seventeenth-Century European Inventories

LINDA ROSENFELD SHULSKY

DUTCH, FRENCH, AND ENGLISH collectors amassed large quantities of Oriental porcelain throughout the seventeenth century. During the early years of the century, a majority of these collections would have contained only blue-and-white Chinese porcelain, because only such pieces were available. The collection of Amalia von Solms in Noordeinde, Holland, for example, as listed in the 1632 inventory, included 445 pieces of porcelain, which were arranged in the form of pyramids.<sup>1</sup> No color was specified for each piece, but in all probability they were Chinese blue and white. Similarly, the inventories of the collections of King Louis XIV, taken in 1681,<sup>2</sup> and that of the Dauphin at Versailles taken in 1689,<sup>3</sup> show that the overwhelming preference was for blue-and-white porcelain.

Toward the end of the century, however, a change in taste occurred both in England and in Holland, when colored porcelain began to form a significant percentage of both Dutch and English collections. Because Holland, through the Dutch East India Company, was the European country most active in trade with China and Japan, the Dutch collections represented the most advanced taste. The inventories of these collections do not, however, distinguish between Japanese and Chinese wares. As many as 112 of the 415 pieces owned by Amalia of Nassau-Dietz at Leeuwarden in 1694 were polychrome,<sup>4</sup> as were at least 103 of the 787 collected by Queen Mary at Kensington Palace<sup>5</sup> and 360 of the 1,211 listed in the inventory of the collection of Albertina Agnes at Oranienstein in 1695.<sup>6</sup> At Burghley House, Lincolnshire, where the collection has remained largely intact and many pieces of Japanese porcelain have survived, 84 of the 218 pieces described in the Conveyance and Schedule of Gift of 1690 were polychrome, whereas only 34 of 190 such pieces are listed in the inventory taken two years earlier.<sup>7</sup> In many cases, however, color is not specified, which suggests that the actual number in polychrome may have been greater.

The Japanese porcelain at Burghley House in the collection of Queen Mary (still at Hampton Court), and in that of Sophie Charlotte, wife of Frederick Wilhelm, Elector of Brandenburg, at Oranienburg,<sup>8</sup> demonstrates that it was present in significant numbers in Europe by the end of the seventeenth century. Queen Mary, whose taste was formed in Holland, arranged her 787 pieces of porcelain and Delftware at Kensington Palace so that the polychrome pieces were most prominently displayed. The inventory taken in 1697, three years after her death, describes two large overdoor arrangements in the old bed-



chamber.<sup>9</sup> These were nearly all polychrome and had at the center a "coloured jarr of six squares," probably a Japanese piece of the Hampton Court type (see No. 51). In the anteroom was a symmetrical display over the chimney in which "seven white platts all of a sorte with branches of several coloures," possibly Kakiemon, were arranged down and across rows of "six platts of white & blew."<sup>10</sup>

By the end of the seventeenth century, polychrome porcelain, much of it Japanese, was well represented in German as well as in Dutch and English collections. The importance of the coloring and the style of decoration of the Japanese wares would later be evident in its influence on early-eighteenth-century Dutch faience, as well as on porcelain made in manufactories in many countries in Europe.

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2. Jules Guiffrey, *Inventaire Général du Mobilier de La Couronne sous Louis XIV, 1663-1715* (Paris: Librairie de L'Art, 1886), vol. 2, pp. 85-92.

3. "Agates, cristaux, porcelaines, bronzes et autres curiosités dans le cabinet de Monseigneur le Dauphin à Versailles" (unpublished inventory on microfilm, Sir Francis Watson, Great Britain).

4. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen*, p. 134.

5. Linda Rosenfeld Shulsky, "Queen Mary's Collection of Porcelain and Delft and Its Display at Kensington Palace Based upon an Analysis of the Inventory Taken in 1697" (Master's thesis, the Cooper-Hewitt Museum and Parsons School of Design, 1985), Appendix.

6. Lunsingh Scheurleer, *Inventarissen*, p. 159.

7. "The Inventory of the Goods in Burghley House Belonging to the Rt. Honble John Earle of Exeter and Ann Countesse of Exeter Taken August 21st 1688 and Conveyance and Schedule of Gift of 1690" (manuscript at Burghley House Preservation Trust Ltd., Stamford, Lincolnshire).

8. L. Reidemeister, "Die Porzellankabinette der Brandenburgisch-Preussischen Schlösser," *Jahrbuch der Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* 54 (1933), pp. 262-72.

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10. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

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